Supreme Court, U. S.
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IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73 - 1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA,
as Interventor,
Respondents.

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

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Petitioner prays that a writ of certiorari be issued to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, entered in the above-entitled case on September 24, 1973.

CITATIONS OF OPINIONS BELOW

The opinion of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York is reported at 345 F. Supp. 527 and reproduced in the Joint Appendix hereto at pp. 41a-75a. The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reversing in part the decision of the District Court is reported at 485 F.2d 1355 and is reproduced in the Joint Appendix at pp. 1a-38a. A petition for rehearing, with suggestion for rehearing *en banc*, was denied on November 14, 1973. A copy of the orders denying rehearing is reproduced in the Joint Appendix at pp. 39a-40a.

Jurisdiction

The judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was entered on September 24, 1973. A timely petition for rehearing, with suggestion for rehearing *en banc*, was denied on November 14, 1973, and an extension of time to file a petition for a writ of certiorari to and including February 21, 1974, was granted by Mr. Justice MARSHALL on February 7, 1974. This Court's jurisdiction is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1254(1).

Question Presented

In the absence of competent evidence of any act of the Republic of Cuba, either within or without its territorial jurisdiction, did the mere statements by counsel for the Republic of Cuba that it would not honor Petitioner's claim for the return of money that Cuba never admitted receiving amount to an Act of State by Cuba confiscating the money and thus preventing the courts of this country from fully adjudicating Petitioner's claim on its merits?

Statement of the Case

On September 15, 1960, several manufacturers of Cuban cigars were nationalized by the Republic of Cuba. Before and for a short time after nationalization (or "intervention"), cigars manufactured by these manufacturers were shipped to three principal importers in the United States ("the importers"), including Petitioner. Most of the cigars shipped after intervention were not paid for, but several payments, intended to cover amounts owed for pre-intervention shipments, were made by the importers after intervention.

Lengthy litigation ensued. In early 1961, the former owners ("the owners"), who fled to the United States and elsewhere, sued the importers to obtain payment on all cigars shipped and sued both the importers and the Cuban government for infringing United States trademarks covering the Cuban cigars. The Cuban agents appointed to manage the nationalized businesses, called "interventors", also sought (by attempting to intervene in the owners' actions) to recover for all cigars shipped to the importers.*

The district court resolved the threshold disputes between the interventors and the owners by holding that (1) the owners could prosecute claims for trademark infringement; (2) the owners could recover for pre-intervention shipments; and (3) the interventors could recover for post-intervention shipments. These holdings were affirmed on appeal. *Palicio* v. *Brush & Bloch*, 256 F. Supp. 481 (S.D.N.Y. 1966), *aff'd*, 375 F.2d 1011 (2d Cir.), *cert. denied*, 389 U.S. 830 (1967), see J. App., 5a-6a.

During the *Brush & Bloch* litigation, it was assumed that only insignificant post-intervention payments had been made for pre-intervention shipments. Not until the respective rights of the owners and interventors had been established by *Brush & Bloch* did it become apparent that those amounts were substantial. J. App., 43a-44a. It also became apparent that those payments might well have found their way into the hands of the interventors. Since *Brush & Bloch* had determined that the owners were entitled to such payments, the importers, including Petitioner, claimed, *inter alia*, a right to recover against the interventors for any such moneys they might eventually be held to owe the owners.

The interventors' principal line of defense to this claim of the importers was to dispute that they ever received the payments. J. App., 20a-22a and 46a. During the course of trial, as proof was adduced that the interventors received these payments, counsel for the interventors suggested that its client would not honor a claim for repayment of those funds. Apart from counsel's statement, not

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* Jurisdiction was based upon 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(2), all parties except the importers being foreign states or citizens or subjects thereof.

a shred of evidence was adduced at trial or before the Court of Appeals to support counsel's contention that any act of the Cuban government had taken place.

After trial, the district court found, *inter alia*, that the payments for pre-intervention shipments had been received by the interventors. The court held that the importers remained liable to the owners for those amounts, with interest, but that the importers could recover those amounts, with interest, from the interventors.* The other two importers, who owed larger sums to the interventors than they had mistakenly paid them, recovered these amounts by way of set-off. Petitioner, having paid more to Cuba for pre-intervention shipments than it owed Cuba for post-intervention shipments, recovered an affirmative judgment against the interventors for the difference. J. App., 73a-75a.

The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reversed the holding of the District Court insofar as it granted Petitioner an affirmative judgment, thus requiring Petitioner to pay twice for the same merchandise and allowing the interventors to retain money to which they had been held clearly not entitled. The sole ground for the reversal by the Court of Appeals was that counsel's statements proved that an Act of State had taken place. J. App., 22a-26a. However, under *First Nat'l City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), the Court held that the Act of State doctrine would bar consideration of the importers' counterclaims against the interventors only in excess of the amount of the judgments which the Cuban interventors, in turn, had against the importers. J. App., 28a-31a. Thus, the judgment was reversed only as to Petitioner, who alone had an affirmative judgment against the Cuban interventors.

*The award of prejudgment interest was challenged by all importers. Petitioner herein has joined the other importers in seeking review in this Court of that award and other issues. Such review, however, is sought by conditional cross-petition, requesting that the writ issue only if the interventors' petition is granted.

Reasons For Granting The Writ

1. The decision of the Court of Appeals that an Act of State had occurred constitutes a wholly unprecedented expansion of the Act of State doctrine in two significant respects. First, no affirmative step evidencing the exercise of soverign power was taken by any government official. Second, even if such act had occurred, the statements of counsel were not competent to prove any such act.

Every case thus far dealing with the application of the Act of State doctrine has involved an affirmative step taken by a foreign governmental authority within its territorial jurisdiction. Often the affirmative step consists of a formal decree, as in *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *First Nat'l City Bank of New York*, 270 F. Supp. 1004, 1009 n. 6 (S.D.N.Y. 1967), *aff'd on final appeal*, 406 U.S. 759, 760 (1972); in *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398, 401-05 and nn. 3 and 7 (1964); and in *French* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 23 N.Y.2d 46, 51 (1968). Occasionally (as in times of civil strife), the step is not formal. But, even in such cases, there is always an affirmative step evidencing the intentional use of sovereign power. See *Underhill* v. *Hernandez*, 168 U.S. 250 (1897) (house arrest by military commander during civil war); *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.*, 246 U.S. 297 (1918) (forcible seizure of property by military commander during civil war); and *Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co.*, 246 U.S. 304 (1918) (same).

Here, no step was taken by the Cuban interventors or any other responsible authority of the Republic of Cuba. Moreover, their failure to act—by way of confiscation or otherwise—was perfectly consistent with their continued refusal to admit receipt of the funds. Whatever the evidentiary worth of counsel's statements that his client would not honor Petitioner's claim, they proved nothing more than the fact that Cuba was not affirmatively assuming an obligation it was contesting in court. Assuming, *arguendo*, that counsel's statements could prove anything, they pointed to no affirmative exercise whatsoever of the sovereign power of a foreign country, as has been required by every decision heretofore.

Moreover, it was equally unprecedented to equate counsel's remarks with an Act of State, whatever their content. The Court of Appeals held that the Act of State consisted of the Cuban government's "repudiation" of the obligation to return the funds, "taking the form of a failure to honor the importers' demand (which was confirmed by the Cuban government's counsel at trial)." J. App., 25a. But, as the District Court found, the only basis for the assertion that an Act of State had occurred was counsel's remarks themselves. J. App., 55a.

Once before the Second Circuit held that an in-court statement constituted evidence of a sovereign act; that holding was reversed by this Court. In *Compania Espanola de Navegacion Maritima* v. *The Navemar*, 303 U.S. 68 (1938), a verified statement by the Ambassador of Spain that his country had taken possession of a vessel was filed in court. The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit held on the basis of that statement that the vessel was immune from judicial process. This Court held such a statement not proof of a sovereign act.

If a foreign plenipotentiary's formal and verified statement is not competent evidence of a sovereign act, surely counsel's litigating position should not constitute conclusive proof of such an act. The Court below dwelt at length on the fact that an Act of State need not be formal, but that fact does not obviate the requirements that there must be some act, that the act be that of a government official within the sovereign's territory, and that there must be competent proof of the act. All these elements are lacking here.

2. The extension of the Act of State doctrine to the facts at bar by the Court of Appeals not only was unprecedented but also was wholly unsupportable by any policy considerations which have heretofore justified the application of the doctrine. The doctrine ordinarily, of course, works an exception to the general jurisprudence of this nation which requires equal treatment to all litigants. This exception is particularly dramatic where, as in the case at bar, an innocent litigant's rights, although firmly established in law, are just as firmly eradicated in fact. Thus, we submit, the doctrine should not be invoked simply by talismanic formula; its utilization is tenable only if justified by overriding public policy.

The purposes underlying the Act of State doctrine have been variously stated to be (1) to avoid embarrassment that might result to this country's foreign relations if our courts denied validity to the acts of officials of another state that would be valid in their land (see Restatement 2d, Foreign Relations Law of the United States, § 41, Comment c; *First Nat'l City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759, at 763-765 and 774 [1972]) and (2) to not subject to judicial treatment what, in cases such as expropriations, are "political questions" (see *First Nat'l City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba, supra*, at 785-789 [dissenting opinion]).

Clearly neither policy was served by application of the doctrine here. Surely no embarrassment to our foreign relations can be feared because of a decision which merely conflicts with counsel's litigating position. Without far more convincing evidence of an act of the Cuban government itself, it is simply absurd to suggest that an affirmative judgment against that government could somehow embarrass the relations (actual or potential) between the two countries.

The policy of not adjudicating "political questions" is likewise not served by allowing counsel to invoke the Act of State doctrine without any underlying analysis of whether facts exist justifying its application. The considerations which impel application of the Act of State doctrine because of judicial reluctance to pass upon "political questions" in cases such as foreign expropriation or military seizure are hardly applicable to a case in which there has been no act by a foreign authority. Moreover, we do not deal here with subject matter—such as expropriation or activities under military occupation—which have controversial political implications in the in-

ternational arena. Here, at most, the possibility was raised that Cuba would refuse to pay a simple debt arising out of a straightforward commercial transaction—a transaction that could not conceivably present any thorny political questions. And indeed both the District Court and the Court of Appeals actually decided the legal issues which fully determine the rights of the parties. Only the award of a judgment in accordance with those rights was deemed precluded by the spectre that Cuba might not honor that judgment, not by proof of any act of Cuba that would make such a judgment embarrassing or that would require the courts to become entangled in difficult political questions.

In effect, therefore, the Court of Appeals granted Cuba sovereign immunity to the extent of refusing to award any affirmative judgment against it. The Court simply assumed that Cuba's possible refusal to recognize liability for this claim precluded our courts from requiring Cuba to do so. Yet had Cuba attempted to raise the defense of sovereign immunity, it would have been met with at least three responses: (1) the doctrine is not available with respect to commercial activity such as the sale of goods; (2) the doctrine is not available with respect to a counterclaim, regardless of amount, arising from the same subject matter as that sued upon; and (3) the doctrine cannot be invoked after the merits of the controversy (here, Cuba's receipt of the moneys paid) have been placed in issue. See, respectively, Restatement 2d, Foreign Relations Law of the United States, §§ 69, 70 (2)(b), and 71(1). These responses all arise from the trend of modern decisions, limiting immunity when the sovereign seeks the aid of our courts or when the sovereign seeks immunity in the context of mercantile, non-governmental activity.

The doctrines of sovereign immunity and Act of State arise from a common source and similar policy considerations. See *First Nat'l City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba,* 406 U.S. at 762-763. It is clear, however, that the extension of the Act of State doctrine by the Court of Appeals has obliterated all restraints on the sovereign

immunity defense. Under the Court of Appeals' holding, counsel for a foreign government need only advise our courts that his client will refuse to honor a claim or an adverse ruling. Regardless of the nature of the case, our courts will then be precluded from acting because an "Act of State" will have occurred.

3. The implications of the holding of the Court of Appeals are far-reaching. If that holding is followed, any dispute arising out of a commercial transaction with a foreign government can be immunized from full judicial review in the courts of the United States. A simple statement by counsel for the foreign government will be sufficient to trigger the Act of State doctrine and thus divest our courts of the power to resolve the controversy against the foreign government. We are entering an era marked by a vast increase in commercial dealings between United States nationals and foreign governments—often involving transactions of massive proportions. Under the holding of the Court of Appeals, in disputes arising out of such transactions, our courts will always be available to grant relief against the American national, but, with a word from opposing counsel, never in his favor.

Already the impact of the decision below is being felt, in a case involving far more than the approximately $100,000 at issue here. In *Bank of Boston* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba,* 61 Civ. 2116 (S.D.N.Y.) (decision pending), plaintiff bank's Cuban branches were nationalized. It brought suit to recover for payments it had made on letters of credit issued by its Cuban branches shortly before nationalization. After trial, and after post-trial briefs were submitted, the trial judge called for supplementary briefs on the impact of the Act of State holding in the instant case, adding that the question raised by that holding "quite understandably [was] not covered in the briefs" of the parties.*

* Letter to counsel from Hon. Frederick vP. Bryan (U.S.D.J.) dated January 14, 1974, 61 Civ. 2116 (S.D.N.Y.).

Counsel in that case has again interposed an Act of State claim without evidence of any affirmative action in Cuba—this time against plaintiff's contention that the position is directly contrary to a decree of the Cuban government which assumed the obligations sued upon. Plaintiff's Supplemental Post-Trial Brief, pp. 5-6. That contention simply emphasizes the uncertainty which will be created if the Court of Appeals decision is left unreviewed.

The holding below has not merely decided a federal question of great substance in a way totally in conflict with applicable decisions of this court, but has placed in question all the policy grounds upon which the Act of State cases have been decided and upon which modern limits to the doctrine of sovereign immunity have been based. The decision has ominous implications for all future commercial disputes involving foreign governments which come before the courts of the United States. It should not stand unexamined.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, a writ of certiorari should issue in this case to review the judgment and opinion of the Second Circuit.

February 21, 1974

Respectfully submitted,

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Supreme Court, U. S.
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APPENDIX

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

PETITION FOR CERTIORARI FILED FEBRUARY 21, 1974
CERTIORARI GRANTED MAY 13, 1974

IN THE

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO
THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

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Opinion of District Court, filed March 20, 1972 [reproduced in Joint Appendix, filed with Petition for Certiorari, at 41a - 73a]

Supplemental Memorandum to District Court Opinion, filed June 14, 1972 [reproduced in Joint Appendix, at 73a - 75a]

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Opinion of Court of Appeals, filed September 24, 1973 [reproduced in Joint Appendix, at 1a - 38a]

Denials by Court of Appeals of Petitions for Rehearing and Rehearing en banc, filed November 14, 1973 [reproduced in Joint Appendix, at 39a - 40a]

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CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF RELEVANT DOCKET ENTRIES

This is a petition for certiorari to review the decision of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in four actions against petitioner Dunhill consolidated in the District Court, 61 Civ. 848; 61 Civ. 849; 61 Civ. 850; and 61 Civ. 869. Since the docket entries in these cases are similar, and the four actions were consolidated prior to the filing of amended pleadings, only the relevant docket entries for 61 Civ. 848 are set forth herein.

Date	Proceedings
March 7, 1961	Filed complaint and issued summons.
March 15, 1961	Filed summons and return - served defendants 3/7/61.
[March 27, 1961 to September 29, 1966 -- Various stipulations extending time of defendants to answer.]	
May 16, 1967	Filed notice and order that action is consolidated with 61-849, 61-850, and 61-869 and permitting Republic of Cuba and Daniel Solano Pinera as interventor of Menendez Garcia y Compania, Limitada; F. Palicio y Compania, S.A.; Cifuentes y Compania and Por Larranaga, Fabrica de Tabacos, S.A., permitted to intervene as parties plaintiff in the consolidated action -- the interventor plaintiffs are to file complaint within 45 days as indicated and title is amended accordingly -- Bryan, J M/N.

Date	Proceedings
May 29, 1967	Filed complaint of Interventor-Plaintiffs.
November 8, 1967	Filed Amended Complaint. (Also in 61 Civ. 849, 61 Civ. 850 and 61 Civ. 869.)
November 24, 1967	Filed defendant (Alfred Dunhill of London) Answer to complaint of Interventor-Plaintiffs.
November 30, 1967	Filed Interventor-Plaintiffs Reply to counterclaim of defendant (Alfred Dunhill of London).
December 20, 1967	Filed Interventor-Plaintiffs Interrogatories.
December 27, 1967	Filed defendant Alfred Dunhill of London Interrogatories.
January 8, 1968	Filed Defendant Answers to Interrogatories (Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc.).
January 23, 1968	Filed Answers of Interventor-Plaintiffs to interrogatories, propounded by defendant Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc.
January 14, 1968	Filed Defendant (Alfred Dunhill of London) Amended Answer to the complaint of the Interventor-Plaintiffs.
January 8, 1969	Before Bryan, J. - non-jury trial begun.
January 9, 1969	Trial continued.
January 10, 1969	Trial continued.
January 13, 1969	Trial continued.
January 14, 1969	Trial continued.
January 15, 1969	Trial continued and concluded. Decision reserved.
March 20, 1972	Filed Opinion #38347 by Bryan, J. "This opinion constitutes findings of fact and conclusions of law in the consolidated actions. Settle Judgment on 30 days' notice." (mailed notices) (Filed in 61 Civ. 472).

Date	Proceedings
April 19, 1972	Filed Defendant Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. notice of motion returnable at time and place designated by court, for an order clarifying opinion filed 3-20-72.
June 14, 1972	Filed Supplemental Memorandum by Bryan, J.
August 14, 1972	Filed Final Judgment #72,776. Bryan, J. Judgment entered 8-23-72 Clerk. Entered 8-24-72 - mailed notice.
September 8, 1972	Filed Notice of Appeal by the Republic of Cuba and Daniel Solano Pinera, as Interventor of Menendez, Garcia y Compania, Limitada, etc. (mailed copies).
September 21, 1972	Filed defendants Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. Notice of Appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit from the Order of the Final Judgment of Aug. 23-72. Mailed Notice to Rabinowitz, Boudin & Standard & Jac M. Wolff.
June 19, 1973	Argument heard (by: Friendly, Feinberg and Mansfield, CJJ)
September 24, 1973	Judgment Affirmed in part; reversed in part, Mansfield (& in 72-2379, 72-2385, 72-2390-92, 72-2400-02)
October 9, 1973	Filed petition for rehearing and rehearing in banc (& in 72-2379, 72-2385, 72-2390-92, 72-2400-02) with proof of service
November 14, 1973	Filed order denying petition for rehearing (& in 72-2379, 72-2385, 73-2390-92, 72-2400-02)
November 14, 1973	Filed order denying petition for rehearing in banc (& in 72-2379, 72-2385, 72-2390-92, 72-2400-02)
February 11, 1974	Filed copy of notice by Supreme Court granting extension of time to petition for writ of certiorari to 2-21-74
February 28, 1974	Filed notice of filing of petition for writ of certiorari (Alfred Dunhill) (S.C.#73-1288) (& in 72-2379,85, 90-1-2, 2400-01-02)

Date	Proceedings
February 28, 1974	Filed notice of filing of petition for writ of certiorari (Saks and Co.) (S.C.#73-1289) (& in 72-2379, etc.)
February 28, 1974	Filed notice of filing of petition for writ of certiorari (Republic of Cuba) (S.C.#73-1287) (& in 72-2379, etc.)
May 20, 1974	Filed certified copy of order of Supreme Court granting petition for writ of certiorari (S.C.#73-1288) (Alfred Dunhill) Council in this case are directed to brief and argue certain questions.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

RAFAEL CIFUENTES, RAMON CIFUENTES and MANUEL CIFUENTES, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA; ALONSO MENENDEZ, JOSE M. GARCIA, BENJAMIN MENENDEZ and ADOLFO GARCIA, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.; and F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.,

Owner-Plaintiffs,

- against -

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.; CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA and POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.,

Interventor-Plaintiffs,

- against -

DUNHILL INTERNATIONAL, INC. and ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Defendants.

Interventor-plaintiffs, for their complaint, by their attorneys, Rabinowitz & Boudin, respectfully allege:

1. This Court has jurisdiction of this action under Title 28, U.S.C. § 1332. Interventor-plaintiff Republic of Cuba is a foreign state; interventor-plaintiff Daniel Solano Pinera is a citizen of the Republic of Cuba; Menendez, Garcia y Compania, Limitada, F. Palicio y Compania, S.A., Cifuentes y Compania and Por Larranaga, Fabrica de Tabacos, S.A. are business entities organized under the laws of the Republic of Cuba. Defendants Dunhill International, Inc. and Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. are corporations organized under the laws of the State of Delaward, with offices at 11 East 26th

Street, New York, N.Y.

2. The matter in controversy exceeds, exclusive of interest and costs, the sum of $10,000.

3. Defendants are engaged in the importation and sale of cigars and other tobacco products.

4. Interventor-plaintiff Daniel Solano Pinera is the interventor, duly appointed under the laws of Cuba, of Menendez, Garcia y Compania, Limitada, F. Palicio y Compania, S.A., Cifuentes y Compania and Por Larranaga, Fabrica de Tabacos, S.A., all of which are business entities engaged in the manufacture of cigar and other tobacco products in Cuba and in the sale of such products throughout the world.

5. At various times between September 15, 1960 and February 28, 1961, the interventor-plaintiffs sold to the defendant Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. cigars on an open account on which there is now owing the sum of $91,416.25.

WHEREFORE, interventor-plaintiffs demand judgment against the defendant Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. in the sum of $91,416.25 with interest from February 28, 1961, together with the costs and disbursements of this action.

RABINOWITZ & BOUDIN

By Victor Rabinowitz
Victor Rabinowitz
Member of the Firm
30 East 42nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dated, May 26, 1967

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

RAFAEL CIFUENTES, RAMON CIFUENTES and MANUEL CIFUENTES, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA; ALONSO MENENDEZ, JOSE M. GARCIA, BENJAMIN MENENDEZ, JOSE MENENDEZ and ADOLFO GARCIA, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.; and F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.,	61 Civ.	848 849 850 869
Owner-Plaintiffs,		
-against-	ANSWER	
THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ GARCIA PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.; CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA and POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.,		
Interventor-Plaintiffs,		
-against-		
DUNHILL INTERNATIONAL, INC. and ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,		
Defendants.		

Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., by its attorneys, Strasser, Spiegelberg, Fried & Frank, answering the complaint of the Interventor-Plaintiffs as against said defendant, respectfully alleges as follows:

1. Denies knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in paragraph "1" of the complaint, except admits that the Republic of Cuba is a foreign state and that defendant

Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "Dunhill") is a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware with offices at 11 East 26th Street, New York, New York, and denies that defendant Dunhill International, Inc. maintains offices at 11 East 26th Street, New York, New York.

2. Denies knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in paragraph "4" of the complaint.

3. Denies each and every allegation contained in paragraph "5" of the complaint, except admits that subsequent to September 15, 1960, the interventor-plaintiffs shipped cigars to defendant Dunhill on an open account.

AS AND FOR A FIRST AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, SET-OFF AND COUNTERCLAIM

4. On cigars shipped by said interventor-plaintiffs to defendant Dunhill subsequent to September 15, 1960, there exist outstanding and unpaid claims of defendant Dunhill for damaged cigars in the amount of $1,484.88, for a lost shipment of cigars in the amount of $200.65, and for advertising allowances in the amount of $7,910.19.

AS AND FOR A SECOND AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, SET-OFF AND COUNTERCLAIM

5. That at various times subsequent to September 15, 1960, the interventor-plaintiffs

sold to defendant Dunhill the cigars which are the subject of this action, and said interventor-plaintiffs represented that they were the owners thereof, had full title thereto, and impliedly warranted that said cigars were delivered free of the rightful claim of any third person by way of trademark infringement.

6. That in purchasing said cigars defendant Dunhill relied on said implied warranty.

7. That on or about November 9, 1967, the owner-plaintiffs in this action served defendant Dunhill with an amended complaint alleging that defendant Dunhill has infringed trademarks owned by said owner-plaintiffs, which trademarks were affixed to the cigars sold by the interventor-plaintiffs to defendant Dunhill, and thereby has committed acts of unfair competition against the said owner-plaintiffs, that said amended complaint demands judgment from defendant Dunhill for treble damages and seeks an accounting of the gains, profits and advantages of defendant Dunhill by reason of the alleged infringement of trademarks and acts of unfair competition.

8. That said interventor-plaintiffs have had actual notice of the claims of the owner-plaintiffs by reason of their standing in this action and by service of the amended complaint upon said interventor-plaintiffs; and that said interventor-plaintiffs have refused to defend said action on behalf of defendant Dunhill.

9. That by reason of the foregoing, the interventor-plaintiffs are or may be liable to defendant Dunhill

wholly or in part for any judgment obtained against defendant Dunhill by said owner-plaintiffs on account of the aforesaid claims, together with the costs to Dunhill, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in the defense of said claims.

AS AND FOR A THIRD
AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE

10. Payment by defendant Dunhill of any sums which may be due to interventor-plaintiffs for cigars shipped subsequent to September 15, 1960 has been prohibited by law at least since July 8, 1963 by virtue of the provisions of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. 515.101 et seq.

WHEREFORE, defendant Dunhill demands judgment against the interventor-plaintiffs as follows:

(a) dismissing the complaint served on behalf of the interventor-plaintiffs;

(b) in the amount of $9,595.72 on account of the First Set-Off and Counter-claim contained herein; and

(c) in the amount of any judgment obtained against defendant Dunhill by the owner-plaintiffs on account of the claims of trademark infringement and unfair competition asserted by said owner-plaintiffs against defendant, together

with the costs to defendant Dunhill, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in the defense of said claims, together with the costs and disbursements of this action.

STRASSER, SPIEGELBERG, FRIED & FRANK

By: _____
A Member of the Firm
Attorneys for Defendant
ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.
Office & P.O. Address
120 Broadway
New York, New York 10005

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

RAFAEL CIFUENTES, RAMON CIFUENTES and MANUEL CIFUENTES, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA: ALONSO MENENDEZ, JOSE MENENDEZ and ADOLFO GARCIA, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.; and F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.,	:	61 Civ. 848 849 850 869
Owner-Plaintiffs,	:	
- against -	:	
THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ GARCIA PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.; CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA and POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.,	:	REPLY
Interventor-Plaintiffs,	:	
- against -	:	
DUNHILL INTERNATIONAL, INC. and ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,	:	
Defendants.		

The interventor-plaintiffs, by Rabinowitz & Boudin, their attorneys, for their reply to the answer of the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., allege:

AS AND FOR A REPLY TO
THE FIRST COUNTERCLAIM

1. Deny each and every allegation contained in paragraph 4 of the answer.

AS AND FOR A REPLY TO
THE SECOND COUNTERCLAIM

2. Deny each and every allegation contained in paragraphs 5, 6, 8 and 9 of the answer.

3. Deny each and every allegation contained in paragraph 7 of the answer, except admit that the owner-plaintiffs in this action have served defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., with an amended complaint; interventor-plaintiffs respectfully refer the Court to that complaint for a full statement of the contents thereof.

WHEREFORE, the interventor-plaintiffs demand judgment against the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., dismissing the first and second counterclaims set forth in its answer.

RABINOWITZ & BOUDIN

By: /s/ Victor Rabinowitz
Attorneys for the Interventor-Plaintiffs
Office & P.O. Address
30 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

- X

RAFAEL CIFUENTES, et al.,

Owner-Plaintiffs,

-against-

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA, et al.,

Interventor-Plaintiffs,

-against-

DUNHILL INTERNATIONAL, INC. and ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Defendants.

- X

61 Civ. 848
849
850
869

AMENDED ANSWER

Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., by its attorneys, Strasser, Spiegelberg, Fried & Frank, as and for its amended answer to the complaint of the Interventor-Plaintiffs as against said defendant, respectfully alleges as follows:

1. Denies knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in paragraph "1" of the complaint, except admits that the Republic of Cuba is a foreign state and that defendant Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "Dunhill") is a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware with offices at 11 East 26th Street, New York, New York, and denies that defendant Dunhill International, Inc. maintains offices at 11 East 26th Street, New York, New York.

2. Denies knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in paragraph "4" of the complaint.

3. Denies each and every allegation contained in paragraph "5" of the complaint, except admits that subsequent to September 15, 1960, the interventor-plaintiffs shipped cigars to defendant Dunhill on an open account.

AS AND FOR A FIRST AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, SET-OFF AND COUNTERCLAIM

4. On cigars shipped by said interventor-plaintiffs to defendant Dunhill subsequent to September 15, 1960, there exist outstanding and unpaid claims of defendant Dunhill for damaged cigars in the amount of $1,484.88, for a lost shipment of cigars in the amount of $200.65, and for advertising allowances in the amount of $7,910.19.

AS AND FOR A SECOND AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, SET-OFF AND COUNTERCLAIM

5. That at various times subsequent to September 15, 1960, the interventor-plaintiffs sold to defendant Dunhill the cigars which are the subject of this action, and said interventor-plaintiffs represented that they were the owners thereof, had full title thereto, and impliedly warranted that said cigars were delivered free of the rightful claim of any third person by way of trademark infringement.

6. That in purchasing said cigars defendant Dunhill relied on said implied warranty.

7. That on or about November 9, 1967, the owner-plaintiffs in this action served defendant Dunhill with an amended complaint alleging that defendant Dunhill has infringed trademarks owned by said owner-plaintiffs, which trademarks were affixed to the cigars sold by the interventor-plaintiffs to defendant Dunhill, and thereby has committed acts of unfair competition against the said owner-plaintiffs, that said amended complaint demands judgment from defendant Dunhill for treble damages and seeks an accounting of the gains, profits and advantages of defendant Dunhill by reason of the alleged infringement of trademarks and acts of unfair competition.

8. That said interventor-plaintiffs have had actual notice of the claims of the owner-plaintiffs by reason of their standing in this action and by service of the amended complaint upon said interventor-plaintiffs; and that said interventor-plaintiffs have refused to defend said action on behalf of defendant Dunhill.

9. That by reason of the foregoing, the interventor-plaintiffs are or may be liable to defendant Dunhill wholly or in part for any judgment obtained against defendant Dunhill by said owner-plaintiffs on account of the aforesaid claims, together with the costs to Dunhill, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in the defense of said claims.

AS AND FOR A THIRD AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, SET-OFF AND COUNTERCLAIM

10. Prior to September 15, 1960 the owner-plaintiffs shipped to defendant, and defendant received, shipments of cigars, the invoice prices of which are set forth in Exhibit A to the Stipulation of Facts to which defendant respectfully refers.

11. Subsequent to September 15, 1960, defendant made payment for the aforesaid shipments by checks. The dates of said checks and the persons to whom said checks were made payable are set forth in the aforesaid Exhibit A.

12. On information and belief, interventor-plaintiffs received and retained the proceeds of said checks despite the fact that they knew or should have known that they were not entitled thereto.

13. Defendant has duly demanded of the interventor-plaintiffs return of said proceeds, but no part thereof has been repaid by the interventor-plaintiffs.

AS AND FOR A FOURTH AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE

14. Payment by defendant Dunhill of any sums which may be due to interventor-plaintiffs for cigard shipped subsequent to September 15, 1960 has been prohibited by law at least since July 8, 1963 by virtue of the provisions of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. 515.101 et seq.

WHEREFORE, defendant Dunhill demands judgment

against the interventor-plaintiffs as follows:

(a) dismissing the complaint served on behalf of the interventor-plaintiffs;

(b) in the amount of $9,595.72 on account of the First Set-Off and Counter-claim contained herein;

(c) in the amount of any judgment obtained against defendant Dunhill by the owner-plaintiffs on account of the claims of trademark infringement and unfair competition asserted by said owner-plaintiffs against defendant, together with the costs to defendant Dunhill, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred in the defense of said claims; and

(d) in the amount of all sums received by the interventor-plaintiffs for shipments of cigars to the defendant Dunhill made by the owner-plaintiffs prior to September 15, 1960,

together with the costs and disbursements of this action.

STRASSER, SPIEGELBERG, FRIED & FRANK

By: _____
A Member of the Firm
Attorneys for Defendant
ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.
Office and P.O. Address
120 Broadway
New York, New York 10005

your honor, yourself.

(Recess)

THE COURT: All right.

MR. BLUMSTEIN: The defendant Faber, Coe & Gregg rests, your Honor.

MR. FRIEDMAN: Just two things for defendant Dunhill. We have been handed this morning amended answers to conform to the proof, both to the complaint of the interventor-plaintiffs and the owner-plaintiffs, and I would ask leave to serve and file those amended answers.

THE COURT: Do they change any issues in the case?

MR. FRIEDMAN: No, your Honor, not at all.

MR. RABINOWITZ: They do. I haven't had an opportunity to read it closely but --

MR. FRIEDMAN: Let me describe the amended answers.

THE COURT: Describe the amendments.

MR. FRIEDMAN: The only amendment to the complaint of the owner-plaintiffs is specifically setting forth an affirmative defense to payment with regard to the pre-intervention shipments. And the only change in the amended

answers to the complaint of the interventor-plaintiffs is to allege a setoff and counterclaim similar to the one that was proposed by Mr. Grosz on behalf of Saks, that is, for either money having been received, or whatever the theory is, the moneys received by the interventor-plaintiffs for goods sold or shipments made prior to September 15, 1960.

THE COURT: Well, let me just follow that a minute. I would presume that what you are saying is, in substance, that if I should hold that-- no, I don't quite follow you. Suppose you spell that out a little more carefully, Mr. Friedman.

MR. FRIEDMAN: It would really be in the nature of an alternative argument, your Honor. If the payments that were made by defendant Dunhill after intervention for the goods sold or the goods shipped prior to intervention constitute payment and a discharge on behalf of Dunhill, then the amended answer to the interventor complaint is really irrelevant. But in the alternative, if your Honor should hold that that did not constitute sufficient payment in behalf of Dunhill's obligation --

THE COURT: They're still liable to the owner-plaintiffs.

MR. FRIEDMAN: Then we should be entitled to recover and setoff against any such obligation the amounts that the interventor-plaintiffs received for pre-intervention shipments.

THE COURT: That is right.

MR. FRIEDMAN: I don't think there is any surprise in this. I think your Honor is well aware this has been an issue for well over a year now.

MR. RADINOWITZ: Subject to any defense we might have on the statute of limitations--

THE COURT: Obviously, if there are any defenses to the defenses you are entitled to serve a reply or whatever you want to call it. Presumably it is a reply, a pleading that would state your position. For instance, if you concede there will be a statute of limitation defense -- I am not saying that you do -- you certainly ought to have a pleading so you can draw the issue, and you are entitled to serve that within, say, five days if you wish.

MR. RADINOWITZ: Fine, and we may have the same amount of time then to serve a similar pleading in response to Saks who, I think, served a similar

answer on us two or three days ago.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. WOLFF: There was also served a proposed amended answer as to the complaint of the owner-plaintiffs. I see no claim against us for affirmative judgment, and I assume —

THE COURT: I don't think there could be. I see nothing in this case, Mr. Wolff, that gives rise to the claim for affirmative judgment against your client.

MR. WOLFF: What I would like to conclude with is this, that let it be presumed and deemed for the purposes of this record that the owner-plaintiffs have denied the allegations of the affirmative defenses in the nature of a reply.

THE COURT: All right, it is so assumed, on the record.

MR. WOLFF: And the same with the Saks new answer.

THE COURT: Same with the Saks amended complaint.

MR. FRIEDMAN: May I file it?

THE COURT: Yes, you may file it.

MR. FRIEDMAN: I have just one other thing,

Filed Aug 14 197[illegible]

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

RAFAEL CIFUENTES, RAMON CIFUENTES and MANUEL CIFUENTES, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA; ALONSO MENENDEZ, JOSE M. GARCIA, BENJAMIN MENENDEZ, JOSE MENENDEZ and ADOLFO GARCIA, co-partners, doing business under the firm name and style of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.; and F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.,

Owner-Plaintiffs,

-against-

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor of MENENDEZ, GARCIA Y COMPANIA, LIMITADA; F. PALICIO Y COMPANIA, S.A.; CIFUENTES Y COMPANIA and POR LARRANAGA, FABRICA DE TABACOS, S.A.,

Interventor-Plaintiffs,

-against-

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Defendant.

61 Civil 848
(Includes:
61 Civil 849;
61 Civil 850;
61 Civil 869)

FINAL JUDGMENT

This cause having been considered by this Court upon the pleadings and evidence presented on trial and upon the briefs by the counsel for the parties and upon the findings of fact and conclusions of law set forth in the opinions dated and filed in this Court on March 17, 1972 and June 14, 1972, it is

ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED:

1. Owner-plaintiff, Menendez, Garcia Y Compania, Limitad[illegible] recover of the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., the sum of $133,386.70 with interest thereon from March 7, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972 in the sum of $98,893.74, amounting in all to $232,280.44.

2. The claim of the owner-plaintiff, Cifuentes Y Compania against the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. for goods sold and delivered is dismissed.

3. Owner-plaintiff, F. Palicio Y Compania, S.A., recover of the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., the sum of $1,928.65 with interest thereon from March 8, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $1,429.81, amounting in all to $3,355.46.

4. Owner-plaintiff, Por Larranaga Fabrica De Tabacos, S.A., recover of the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., the sum of $5,977.55 with interest thereon from March 7, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $4,431.95, amounting in all to $10,409.50.

5. Interventor-plaintiffs recover of the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., the sum of $92,949.70 with interest thereon from June 28, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $67,202.96, amounting in all to $160,152.66.

6. Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., recover of the owner-plaintiff, Menendez, Garcia Y Compania, Limitada, by way of offset for damaged cigars, a lost shipment and an advertising allowance the sum of $2,425.04 with interest thereon from March 7, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $1,791.36, amounting in all to $4,216.40.

7. Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., recover of the owner-plaintiff, F. Palicio Y Compania, S. A., by way of offset for damaged cigars, a lost shipment and an advertising allowance the sum of $744.94 with interest thereon from March 8, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $550.14, amounting in all to $1,295.08.

8. Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., recover of the owner-plaintiff, Por Larranaga Fabrica De Tabacos, S.A., by way of offset for damaged cigars, a lost shipment and an advertising allowance the sum of $666.07 with interest thereon from March 7, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $491.75, amounting in all to $1,157.82.

9. Defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., recover of the interventor-plaintiffs, the sum of $141,292.90 and the sum of $5,759.70, said recoveries totalling $147,052.60 with interest thereon from June 28, 1961 at the rate of 6% to June 30, 1968, at the rate of 7-1/4% from July 1, 1968 to February 15, 1969, and at the rate of 7-1/2% from February 16, 1969 to July 19, 1972, in the sum of $106,320.17, amounting in all to $253,372.77.

10. Owner-plaintiff, Menendez, Garcia y Compania, Limitada was, as of February, 1961, the owner of trademark H. UPMANN and the United States trademark registration therefor No. 89,518 and the trademark MONTE CRISTO and the United States trademark registration therefor No. 332,324 and said trademarks and registrations were then valid and subsisting.

11. Owner-plaintiff, Cifuentes y Compania, was, as of February, 1961, the owner of its trademark PARTAGAS and the United States trademark registration therefor Nos. 356,751, 440,817, 544,329 and 545,830 and its trademark RAMON ALLONES and the United States trademark registrations therefor Nos. 240,574 and 529,452 and said marks and registrations were then valid and subsisting.

12. Owner-plaintiff, Por Larranaga Fabrica De Tabacos, S.A., was, as of February, 1961, the owner of its trademark POR LARRANAGA and the United States trademark registrations therefor Nos. 277,130 and 277,131 and said marks and registrations were then valid and subsisting.

13. Owner-plaintiff, F. Palicio y Compania, S.A., was, as of February, 1961, the owner of its trademark HOYO DE MONTERREY and the United States trademark registration therefor No. 86,340 and its trademark BELINDA and the United States trademark registrations therefor Nos. 111,205, 226,818 and 307,755 and its trademark PUNCH and the United States trademark registration therefor No. 261,894, which marks and registrations were then valid and subsisting.

14. The interventor-plaintiffs and the defendant, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., did unfairly compete with all of the owner-plaintiffs and infringed the said trademark rights of all of the owner-plaintiffs prior to February, 1961.

15. The owner-plaintiffs suffered no damage as a result of such unfair competition and infringement and hence are denied recovery of damages and profits with respect thereto.

16. The owner-plaintiffs are denied an injunction against future unfair competition and trademark infringement by the defendant and the interventor-plaintiffs at this time, but without prejudice to an application for such relief under appropriate circumstances in the future.

17. The owner-plaintiffs ~~and the interventor-plaintiffs~~ are hereby awarded costs against the defendant, ~~which costs shall be~~ borne by the defendant on a pro rata basis in ~~accordance with the total amounts required by this judgment to be actually paid by the defendant~~, respectively to the ~~owners and the interventors~~; and the defendant is awarded costs against the interventor-plaintiffs.

Frederick VP Bryan
U. S. D. J.

Dated: August 12 1972

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF THE CLERK
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20543

May 13, 1974

Leon Silverman, Esq.
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver
& Jacobson
120 Broadway
New York, N. Y. 10005

RE: ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC. v.
REPUBLIC OF CUBA, No. 73-1288

Dear Mr. Silverman:

The Court today took the following action in the above case:

"The petition for a writ of certiorari is granted. Counsel in this case are directed to brief and argue the following questions:

'1. Can statements by counsel for the Republic of Cuba, that petitioner's unjust enrichment counterclaim would not be honored, constitute an act of state?

'2. If so, is an exception to the act of state doctrine created, under First National City Bank v. Banco Nacional de Cuba, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), where petitioner's counterclaim does not exceed the net balance owed to Cuba on its claims by petitioner's co-defendants, and where all claims and counterclaims arise out of the subject matter in litigation in this case?'"

Enclosed are memorandums describing the time requirements and procedures under the Rules.

The additional docketing fee of $50, Rule 52(a) is due and payable.

Very truly yours,

MICHAEL RODAK, JR., Clerk
By Helen K. Loughran
(Mrs.) Helen K. Loughran
Assistant Clerk

Encls.

Supreme Court, U. S.
FILED
MAR 22 1974
MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

—against—

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, As Interventor,

Respondents.

BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO PETITION FOR CERTIORARI

RABINOWITZ, BOUDIN & STANDARD
Attorneys for Respondents
30 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017

March 20, 1974

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

—against—

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, As Interventor,

Respondents.

BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO PETITION FOR CERTIORARI

The respondents, Republic of Cuba and Daniel Solano Pinera, as Interventor, oppose the granting of a petition for certiorari in this matter for the following reasons:

1. The petition for certiorari seeks consideration of a question passed upon by this Court in *Banco Nacional* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398, 415, fn. 17 (1964). It is clear from that decision that the Court will not inquire into the degree of formality with which an act of state is expressed. Applying the test held proper in the second paragraph of that footnote, we would have to inquire whether the Cuban courts would recognize the legitimacy of the debt in question here. The answer is as clearly in the negative in this case

as it was in the *Sabbatino* case. And, see *French* v. *Banco Nacional*, 23 N.Y.2d 46 at 65 (1968).

2. Furthermore, the petition is based on a serious distortion of the record and on a consequent misstatement of respondents' position.

First, petitioner (Pet. p. 3) materially misstates the nature of the holding by the district court in *Palicio* v. *Brush & Bloch*, 256 F.Supp. 481 (S.D.N.Y. 1966), aff'd, 375 F.2d 1011 (2nd Cir. 1967), cert. den., 389 U.S. 830 (1967). In that case the district court decided that the respondents could recover for post-intervention shipments but it did not pass upon "the question of who was entitled to pursue claims for the price of cigars shipped . . . before the intervention . . ." (J.A. 43a). The Court of Appeals agreed (J.A. 10a). That issue, the right to payment for pre-intervention shipments, was before the court in this case and it was extensively litigated.

From its faulty premise, petitioner goes on to assert that respondents had, in this case, denied receipt of the payments for pre-intervention shipments. Indeed, at p. 3 of the petition, such denial is characterized as "interventors' principal line of defense." The Cuban government's alleged "failure to act" was, says petitioner, consistent with this defense (Pet. p. 5).

But respondents never denied receipt of the payments, and the record seems clear that a large portion of the payments were, in fact, received. Respondents merely stated to the court the fact that their records of the 1960 transactions were incomplete and that they could not either affirm or deny receipt of the funds (J.A. 22a, 46a.).[1] The fact

1. We must recall that the events which gave rise to this lawsuit took place in the midst of a revolution in Cuba, and the loss or destruction of the records of commercial transactions is not particularly surprising.

that the records were lost was not respondents' "principal line of defense." It was merely an argument which sought to shift the burden of proof of payment to the importers. The district court held that the importers had sufficiently proven that they had paid the funds in question to the interventor and that the interventor had received those monies; the respondents disagreed with that conclusion, but, on appeal, the Court of Appeals affirmed the decision of the lower court and there is no further issue as to this matter.

The respondents did, however, have serious substantive grounds for contesting their liability. They argued that even if they had received the payments, the payments were not recoverable in this suit because (1) the nationalization of the owners' property included the nationalization of the owners' accounts receivable, and hence the interventor was entitled to the payments in question (J.A. 47a, 48a); and (2) in any event, the Act of State doctrine was a complete defense.

3. We must initially note that this is not a case like *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.*, 246 U.S. 297 (1918) or *Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co.*, 246 U.S. 304 (1918), in which the foreign state whose act was alleged as a defense was not a party to the action. In such cases, obviously, some degree of formality might reasonably be required to enable a third party to plead act of state.[2] *French* v. *Banco Nacional*, supra at 66, fn. 1. But here, the Republic of Cuba is a party to the suit. For seven long years it has been asserting that its repudiation of the debt was its act of state. That assertion was made in the district court, in the court of appeals and is now being made in this Court. It has been and is being made by counsel, which is the way a party litigant makes known its legal position in our

2. It will be noted that even in many of these cases, the act of state found to be binding was, to put it mildly, informal.

judicial system. The reason for the assertion of the defense of act of state—whether it be because of Cuba's view of the law, or considerations of its own public policy—is not relevant. The courts have never inquired into the reasons for the assertion of an act of state defense.

4. Petitioner places heavy reliance on *Compania Espanola de Navegacion Maritima* v. *The Navemar*, 303 U.S. 68 (1938), which is cited for the proposition that the statement of an ambassador is not "evidence of a sovereign act" and hence the statement of counsel is not (Pet. p. 6). Petitioner misreads the case. The issue there was whether, in fact, the government of Spain had ever taken possession of The Navemar while it was at Rosario or Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Spanish government, speaking through its Ambassador, contended that it had taken possession of the ship in one of those ports; the record showed no such act by the Spanish government. The issue in that case was not whether the Court would accept the statement of the Ambassador as a statement of the government, but rather whether the statement of the government, as asserted through the Ambassador, was in fact supported by the record. The Court found that it was not.[3]

Finally, it will be noted that the issue in *The Navemar* was whether sovereign immunity applied and not act of state. There could have been no act of state defense made because, as we have noted, the act in question was alleged to have taken place outside the territory of Spain.

5. Petitioner argues (Pet. p. 9) that the decision of the court below obliterates the difference between the act of state doctrine and sovereign immunity, thus destroying the restrictive nature of the latter doctrine.

3. The Court will recall that the facts giving rise to *The Navemar* litigation arose in the midst of the Spanish Civil War, at a time when there was much doubt as to who was the Spanish government.

There is no doubt that the doctrines of sovereign immunity and act of state are related and that at times they overlap. There are many cases in which sovereign immunity is a defense and act of state would not be. For example, *Spacil* v. *Crowe*, 489 F.2d 614 (5th Cir., 1974). There are other cases in which the converse is true. *French* v. *Banco Nacional, supra; Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co., supra; Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co., supra.* And there may be still other situations in which either defense would be available.

But the difference between the doctrines still exists and the decision of the court below does not erase that difference. For example, sovereign immunity is available only to the sovereign and may be restricted in its nature;[4] the act of state defense is available only as to acts done within the territory of the state.

Petitioners' analysis makes little sense since it seems to admit that if some Cuban government agency had enacted a decree saying "we hereby repudiate this debt," all of the dire consequences considered at page 9 of its petition would have followed anyhow. The requirement of such a pro forma decree is precisely the "formality" which this Court rejected as unnecessary in *Sabbatino, supra*, p. 1.

6. Petitioner makes reference to *Bank of Boston* v. *Banco Nacional*, 61 Civ. 2116 (S.D.N.Y.) (decision pending), and it is true that the decision of the Court of Appeals here may have a decisive effect on that case. But it is *not* true, as petitioner suggests (Pet. p. 9), that the defendant

4. Compare the "Tate Letter," 26 U.S. State Dept. Bulletin 984 (1952) and *Victory Transport* v. *Comisaria General*, 336 F.2d 354 (1964), with *Rich* v. *Naviera Vacuba*, 295 F.2d 24 (4th Cir. 1961) and *Spacil* v. *Crowe, supra.* Actually this Court has never passed on the State Department position as expressed in the Tate Letter, although, as the cases cited indicate, the State Department itself ignores the Tate Letter when it seems politically advisable.

in that case belatedly raised the act of state defense. Actually, the defense was pleaded in its answer and was argued to the court both in pre-trial and post-trial briefs, and in oral argument.[5]

7. A final note. If an act of state doctrine was not available to respondents, the result would be same. As the Court of Appeals pointed out (J.A. 24a), the obligation on which petitioner sues was quasi-contractual in nature; it arose in Cuba, and its situs was in Cuba. Accordingly it would be governed by Cuban law in any event. There can be little doubt that in the circumstances of this case Cuban courts would hold for the respondents.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: March 20, 1974.

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5. Petitioner, at page 9, misquotes a letter from Judge Bryan. Judge Bryan did not say that the act of state issue was not covered in the briefs of the parties; what he said was that the impact of the decision of the Court of Appeals in this case was not covered in the briefs of the parties, which was "quite understandabl[e]" because the decision here came down a year after the briefs in the *Bank of Boston* case were submitted.

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1283

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR THE PETITIONER

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August 8, 1974

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IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA,
as Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES
COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR THE PETITIONER

Opinions Below

The opinion of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York is reported at 345 F. Supp. 527 and is reproduced in the Joint Appendix filed with the Petition for a Writ of Certiorari (J. App.) at pages 41a-75a. The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, reversing in part the decision of the District Court, is reported at 485 F.2d 1355 and is reproduced in the Joint Appendix at pages 1a-38a.

Jurisdiction

The judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was entered on September 24, 1973.

A timely petition for rehearing, with suggestion for rehearing en banc, was denied on November 14, 1973, and an extension of time to file a petition for a writ of certiorari to and including February 21, 1974 was granted by Mr. Justice MARSHALL on February 7, 1974. The petition was filed on February 21, 1974 and was granted on May 13, 1974. This Court's jurisdiction is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1254 (1).

Questions Presented

As framed by the Court in granting the petition, the questions presented are:

1. Can statements by counsel for the Republic of Cuba, that petitioner's unjust enrichment counterclaim would not be honored, constitute an "act of state"?

2. If so, is an exception to the act of state doctrine created, under *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba,* 406 U.S. 759 (1972), where petitioner's counterclaim does not exceed the net balance owed to Cuba on its claims by petitioner's co-defendants, and where all claims and counterclaims arise out of the subject matter in litigation in this case?

Statement

On September 15, 1960, several Cuban manufacturers of cigars were nationalized by the Republic of Cuba. Before and for a short time after nationalization (or "intervention"), cigars manufactured by these manufacturers were shipped to three principal importers in the United States ("the importers"), including Petitioner ("Dunhill"). Most of the cigars shipped after intervention were not paid for, but several payments, intended to cover amounts owed for pre-intervention shipments, were made by the importers after intervention.

Lengthy litigation ensued. In early 1961, these former owners ("the owners"), who fled to the United States and elsewhere, sued the importers to obtain payment on all cigars shipped both before and after intervention, and sued both the importers and the Cuban government for infringing their United States trademarks applicable to the cigars. The Cuban agents appointed to manage the nationalized businesses, called "interventors," also sought (by attempting to intervene in the owners' actions) to recover for all cigars shipped by the importers.

Holding in abeyance the actions against the importers, the District Court resolved the threshold disputes between the interventors and the owners by holding that (1) the owners could prosecute claims for trademark infringement, and (2) the interventors could recover for post-intervention shipments. These holdings were affirmed on appeal. *Palicio* v. *Brush & Bloch,* 256 F. Supp. 481 (S.D.N.Y. 1966), *aff'd,* 375 F.2d 1011 (2d Cir.), *cert. denied,* 389 U.S. 830 (1967). See J. App., 5a-6a.

During the *Brush & Bloch* litigation, it was assumed by all the parties that only insignificant post-intervention payments had been made for pre-intervention shipments. Not until after the respective rights of the owners and interventors had been established by *Brush & Bloch* did it become apparent that those assumptions were incorrect. J. App., 43a-44a. Discovery revealed that substantial amounts were involved and that those payments might well have found their way into the hands of the interventors. During the trial the importers, including Dunhill, claimed a right to recover against the interventors for any such moneys that the importers might eventually be held to owe the owners. J. App., 45a.

The interventors' principal line of defense to this claim of the importers was to dispute that they ever received the payments. J. App., 20a-22a and 46a. During the course of

trial, as proof was adduced that the interventors *had* actually received these payments, counsel for the interventors suggested that his clients would not honor a claim for repayment of those funds. This suggestion the Court of Appeals turned into an "act of state." Apart from counsel's statements, not a shred of evidence was adduced at trial or before the Court of Appeals to support counsel's contention that any act of the Cuban government had taken place with respect to the funds at issue.

The District Court found that the payments for pre-intervention shipments had, in fact, been received by the interventors. The court held that the importers were nevertheless liable to the owners for those amounts, with interest. It also held that the importers could recover those amounts, with interest, from the interventors. The other two importers, who owed larger sums to the interventors than they had mistakenly paid them, recovered these amounts by way of set-off. Dunhill, having paid more to the Cuban government's agents for pre-intervention shipments than it owed for post-intervention shipments, recovered an affirmative judgment against the interventors for the difference. J. App., 73a-75a. That difference was substantially less than the net balance found owing from the other importers to the interventors. J. App., 44a-45a. Dunhill's post-trial motion to obtain the affirmative judgment was not opposed by the interventors. J. App., 74a-75a.

The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reversed the holding of the District Court insofar as it granted Dunhill an affirmative judgment. In effect, it required Dunhill to pay twice for the same merchandise and allowed the interventors to retain money to which they had been held clearly not entitled. The sole ground for the reversal by the Court of Appeals was its view that it was bound to recognize an act of state by the government of Cuba to bar such affirmative relief. However, relying on *First National*

City Bank v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), the Court also held that the act of state doctrine barred consideration of the importers' counterclaims against the interventors only to the extent they exceeded the judgments which the Cuban interventors had, in turn, recovered against the importers. J. App., 28a-31a. Thus, the judgment was reversed only as to Dunhill, which alone had obtained an affirmative judgment against the Cuban interventors. And of what did this act of the Cuban state consist? Nothing other than unsubstantiated statements of counsel for the interventors that they would not pay any judgment against them ordered by the Court.

Summary of Argument

I. An in-court statement of counsel cannot constitute an "act of state." Any "act of state" includes two distinct elements, both of which are lacking here: First, the act must be a public act of a recognized foreign sovereign, and, second, the act must be committed within that sovereign's own territory. *See Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398, 401 (1964). In all previous cases before the court, there has in fact been such a public act within the sovereign's own territory. It is such acts, and only such acts, which the courts may be required to respect in rendering judgment.

The in-court statements of counsel are not the public act of a sovereign and clearly did not take place within the sovereign's territory. Counsel's remarks were no more than statements of his litigating position. To allow such statements to be deemed an act of state would render foreign sovereigns immune to adverse judgments in our courtrooms.

This Court has recently explored at length the bases for and appropriate application of the act of state doctrine.

In *Sabbatino* it suggested that the *major* consideration in applying the act of state doctrine to a given case is the relative competency of the political versus the judicial branches of the government to consider an issue that may affect the foreign relations of the nation. If the act of state to be respected is a decree, an order, some action of a sovereign within its own territory, the political branches may well be more competent than the judicial to judge if those acts should be respected. In such cases, justification exists for the application of the act of state doctrine. However, this case raises no sensitive political issues requiring the court to defer its decision to the political branches. It is a commercial case, in which a foreign government's agents have invoked the processes of our courts and can and should be required to abide by their judgments.

To decide against the respondent will in no way cause affront to the Cuban government; its agents entered our courts seeking an adjudication of entitlement to payment for shipments of tobacco they claimed to own. To permit application of the act of state doctrine here could have a major unsettling effect on international transactions which are increasingly made with commercial agencies of foreign governments. It would establish the precedent that after invoking the aid of our courts to seek relief, such agencies could with impunity in mid-trial call a halt to the proceedings when their counsel thought it expedient. Nothing this Court has ever had to say on the act of state doctrine supports such a rule.

II. Assuming, *arguendo*, that the act of state doctrine was properly invoked, Dunhill is, nevertheless, entitled to recover the full amount of its counterclaim. The exception to the act of state doctrine, created by *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), is applicable to the case at bar. Indeed, the facts here present an even stronger case for judicial consideration of a defendant's counterclaim.

There is no danger that a judicial determination of Dunhill's counterclaim would embarrass American foreign relations. The Cuban government selected the American courts in which to adjudicate its dispute with Petitioner. As far as the record discloses, that government has taken no political act challenging the competency of our courts to render judgment in this commercial matter. And there has been absolutely no indication from our Department of State that delicate foreign relations will be disturbed by an adjudication of the issues presented here.

To the extent the Executive Department has expressed any sentiment relevant to this case, it suggests strongly that Dunhill's counterclaim must be heard. In *First National City Bank*, the courts relied on a letter of Legal Advisor Stevenson denying executive objections to adjudication. The letter itself states that the policy expressed therein applied to the First National City Bank dispute and to "like cases." *See Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *First National City Bank*, 442 F.2d 530, 538 (2d Cir. 1971), *rev'd* 406 U.S. 759 (1972).

In any event, granting Dunhill the remedy it seeks will not result in enforcing an affirmative judgment against the Cuban government. Cuba has submitted for judicial resolution claims that are greatly in excess of the counterclaims against it. Since the claims and counterclaims all arise out of the same subject matter, the equities for allowing the counterclaim in full are even more strongly with Dunhill than they were with the defendant in *First National City Bank*. All such a judgment will do is to avoid the unfair and surely anomalous result of requiring Dunhill to pay twice (with interest) for the same goods because of a dispute between a foreign government and its own former citizens.

ARGUMENT

I.

The in-court statements by counsel that the Republic of Cuba would not honor the importers' unjust enrichment counterclaims did not constitute an act of state.

The first issue is whether or not the in-court statements by counsel for the Republic of Cuba that his client would not honor Petitioner's claim for repayment of funds, absent any further evidence of some official act of the political sovereign of that nation, can constitute an act of state. We respectfully submit that such statements lack the essential elements of an act of state and that clothing such statements with the mantle "act of state" would not serve the fundamental purpose underlying the doctrine. Accordingly, those statements should not be deemed to constitute an act of state.

A. Counsel's in-court statements lack two essential elements of an act of state: they were not public acts of a recognized sovereign, nor were they made within the territorial jurisdiction of a foreign sovereign.

Most probably having its genesis early in our history [*see Hudson* v. *Guestier*, 8 U.S. (4 Cranch) 293, 294 (1808); *The Schooner Exchange* v. *M'Faddon*, 11 U.S. (7 Cranch) 116, 136 (1812)], the act of state doctrine has more recently been applied with increasing frequency to the expropriatory acts of foreign governments, including the Respondent, Republic of Cuba. In general terms, it seems agreed that the doctrine is "judicially created to effectuate general notions of comity among nations and among the respective branches of the Federal government." *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759, 762 (1972). Since, however, application of the doctrine results in abstention by the courts from deciding cases and controversies otherwise properly before them, this Court also has recognized that:

> "The act of state doctrine represents an exception to the general rule that a court of the United States, where appropriate jurisdictional standards are met, will decide cases before it by choosing the rule appropriate for decision from among various sources of law including international law." *Id.*, 406 U.S. at 763.

Although there may exist some uncertainty as to the precise circumstances under which the act of state doctrine will be applied, the essential elements of an act of state have been set forth clearly and repeatedly both in this Court and elsewhere. The classic formulation of the doctrine was enunciated by the Court in *Underhill* v. *Hernandez*, 168 U.S. 250 (1897). In recognizing the validity of certain acts of a revolutionary Venezuelan military commander whose government had been later recognized by the United States, the Court said:

> "Every sovereign state is bound to respect the independence of every other sovereign state, and the courts of one country will not sit in judgment on the acts of the government of another done within its own territory." 168 U.S. at 252.

These elements were restated by the Court in *Sabbatino* as follows:

> "The act of state doctrine in its traditional formulation precludes the courts of this country from inquiring into the validity of the public acts a recognized foreign sovereign power committed within its own territory." *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398, 401 (1964).

These essential elements—(a) that there be a public affirmative act of a recognized sovereign and (b) that such an

act be committed within the sovereign's own territory—have been consistently regarded as the *sine qua non* of an act of state by case and commentator alike.*

Moreover, every other case thus far which has applied the act of state doctrine has in fact involved an affirmative, public act by a foreign governmental authority within its territorial jurisdiction. Often the affirmative step consists of an executive decree, as in *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *First National City Bank*, 270 F. Supp. 1004, 1009 n.6 (S.D.N.Y. 1967), *rev'd*, 431 F.2d 394 (2d Cir. 1970); *vacated and remanded*, 400 U.S. 1019 (1971); *adhered to on remand*, 442 F.2d 530 (2d Cir.); *rev'd*, 406 U.S. 759, 760 (1972); in *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398, 401-05 & nn. 3 & 7 (1964); and in *French* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 23 N.Y.2d 46, 51, 242 N.E.2d 704, 707 (1968). In other cases, the act is legislative in nature. *E.g.*, *Eastern States Petroleum Co.* v. *Asiatic Petroleum Corp.*, 28 F. Supp. 279 (S.D.N.Y. 1939); *see* 2 D. O'Connell, International Law 874-76 (1965). Occasionally (as in times of civil strife), the step is not formal. But even in such cases there is always an affirmative step evidencing the intentional use of sovereign power. *See, e.g.*, *Underhill* v. *Hernandez*, 168 U.S. 250 (1897) (house arrest by military commander during civil war); *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.*, 246 U.S. 297 (1918) (forcible seizure of property by military commander during civil war); and *Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co.*, 246 U.S. 304 (1918) (same).

* *United States* v. *Pink*, 315 U.S. 203, 233 (1942); *Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co.*, 246 U.S. 304, 309 (1918); *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.*, 246 U.S. 297, 303 (quoting *Hernandez*) (1918); *French* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 23 N.Y.2d 46, 52, 242 N.E.2d 704 (1968). *See also The Supreme Court, 1971 Term*, 86 Harv. L. Rev. 1, 284 (1972); Note, *Act of State*, 14 Harv. Int'l L.J. 131, 133 (1973); Recent Developments, *The Act of State Doctrine*, 8 Texas Int'l L.J. 271, 274 (1973); Note, *The Castro Government in American Courts: Sovereign Immunity and the Act of State Doctrine*, 75 Harv. L. Rev. 1607, 1608-09 (1962); 12 A.L.R. Fed. 707, 732.

And in those few cases where the specific issues were raised as to whether the "act" was a public expression of a sovereign or was committed in its territory, the courts have insisted that both requirements be met. Thus, in *Victory Transport Inc.* v. *Comisaria General de Abastecimientos y Transportes*, 336 F.2d 354 (2d Cir. 1964), *cert. denied*, 381 U.S. 934 (1965), appellant claimed that the designation of certain ports as "safe" for its ship constituted an act of state, and thus it was relieved of liability for damage to the ship. The Second Circuit, relying on the formulation of the act of state doctrine in *Sabbatino*, concluded that:

> "designation of the ports as safe was not an act performed within the territory of Spain, nor was it performed by the Government of Spain. . . . Appellant's act of state argument is therefore considerably wide of the mark." 336 F.2d at 363.

Similarly, in *Menzel* v. *List*, 49 Misc. 2d 300, 267 N.Y.S.2d 804 (Sup. Ct. 1966); *mod. on other grounds*, 28 A.D.2d 516, 279 N.Y.S.2d 608 (1st Dept. 1967); *rev'd on other grounds*, 24 N.Y.2d 91, 246 N.E.2d 742 (1969), where it was alleged as a defense to a replevin action that the previous requisition of a painting by the Nazis was an act of state the legality of which could not be questioned, the court held, *inter alia*, that since the painting was taken in Brussels, it was not an act of state because it was "not [done] within its own territory." 49 Misc. 2d at 311, 267 N.Y.S.2d at 815. *See also* 14 Harv. Int'l L.J. 131, 133 (1973); 12 A.L.R. Fed. 707, 775-76.

Here, there was no proof of *any* act by the Cuban interventors or any other responsible authority of the Republic of Cuba. Whatever the evidentiary worth of counsel's statements that his client would not honor the importers' claims, they proved nothing more than the fact that Cuba was not affirmatively assuming an obligation it was contest-

ing in court. Assuming, *arguendo,* that counsel's statements could prove anything, they pointed to no affirmative exercise whatsoever of the sovereign power of a foreign country within its territory, as had been required by every decision heretofore.

Once before the Second Circuit held that an in-court statement constituted evidence of a sovereign act; that holding was reversed by this Court. In *Compania Espanola de Navegacion Maritima* v. *The Navemar,* 303 U.S. 68 (1938), a verified statement by the Ambassador of Spain that his country had taken possession of a vessel was filed in court. The Court of Appeals of the Second Circuit had held on the basis of that statement that the vessel was immune from judicial process. This Court held such a statement not proof of a sovereign act.

If a foreign plenipotentiary's formal and verified statement is not competent evidence of a sovereign act within its territory, surely counsel's litigating position should not constitute conclusive proof of such an act. The Court below dwelt at length on the fact that an act of state need not be formal, but that fact does not obviate the requirements that there must be some public, affirmative act, that the act be that of a government official within the sovereign's territory, and that there must be competent proof of the act. All these elements are lacking here.

B. The fundamental policy underlying the act of state doctrine would not be served by expanding it to encompass counsel's in-court statements.

In Point A, *supra,* we demonstrated that attributing act of state status to counsel's in-court statements clearly would be contrary to both the language and the holdings of decisional and other authority. We submit further that such an expansion of the act of state doctrine would not serve its fundamental purpose as enunciated by this Court in its most recent decisions dealing with the doctrine.

The courts have offered various rationales for application of the act of state doctrine. The earlier cases suggested that the application of the doctrine was compelled by the inherent nature of sovereign authority. *See Underhill* v. *Hernandez,* 168 U.S. at 252; *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.,* 256 U.S. at 303-04. However, the Court in *Sabbatino* explicitly rejected so broad a justification for the doctrine:

> "We do not believe that this doctrine is compelled either by the inherent nature of sovereign authority . . . or by some principle of international law." 376 U.S. at 421.

The *Sabbatino* Court further limited the possible justifications for the act of state doctrine:

> "The text of the Constitution does not require the act of state doctrine; it does not irrevocably remove from the judiciary the capacity to review the validity of foreign acts of state." 376 U.S. at 423.

The Court then set out what it deemed to be the proper rationale for the doctrine:

> "It arises out of the basic relationships between branches of government in a system of separation of powers. It concerns the competency of dissimilar institutions to make and implement particular kinds of decisions in the area of international relations." 376 U.S. at 423.

And although there was manifest disagreement in *First National City Bank* concerning the precise circumstances under which the act of state doctrine should be applied, all of the Justices there agreed with *Sabbatino* that the doctrine's:

> "continuing vitality depends on its capacity to reflect the proper distribution of functions between the judicial and political branches of the Government on matters bearing upon foreign affairs."

First National City Bank v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. at 763 (Rehnquist, *J.*); *id.* at 774 (Powell, *J.*, concurring); *id.* at 772 (Douglas, *J.*, concurring); *id.* at 785 (Brennan, *J.*, dissenting).

We submit, therefore, that expansion of the act of state doctrine to encompass in-court statements of counsel as in the case at bar should be undertaken only if required by the respective roles of the judiciary and the executive in the area of international relations or foreign affairs. We submit further that analysis demonstrates no conceivable justification for such a result. On the contrary, the five factors suggested by the Court in *Sabbatino* as bearing on the relative competencies of the political and the judicial branches in this area show conclusively why a public act of a recognized foreign sovereign committed within its own territory is necessary for the application of the act of state doctrine, and thus why the in-court statement of counsel cannot be deemed such an act of state:

1. *Embarrassment to U.S. Foreign Relations.* In *Sabbatino*, the Court stated:

> "It is . . . evident that some aspects of international law touch much more sharply on national nerves than do others; the less important the implications of an issue are for our foreign relations, the weaker the justification for exclusivity in the political branches." 376 U.S. at 428.

The Court suggests that the act of state doctrine rightly is invoked where the judicial branch is called upon to rule on difficult political issues beyond its competence and where "the very expression of judicial uncertainty might provide embarrassment to the Executive Branch." 376 U.S. at 433. This *might* have been the situation in the instant case if evidence had been presented which pointed to some act of the Cuban government such as a law or decree expropriating Dunhill's money held by Cuba or repudiating Dunhill's claim for its return. However, it is hard to see

how disregarding the statement of counsel, which statement was not backed by *any* evidence whatsoever of a governmental act, can in any way exacerbate foreign relations or embarrass our government. To allow the statement of counsel, absent any other sovereign act, to be deemed an act of state is to have the courts anticipate a sensitive political issue where in fact one may not exist.

2. *Affront to Foreign Governments.* Another consideration in applying the act of state doctrine is the avoidance of offense to other nations. The Court stated in *Sabbatino*:

> "Such decisions [as validity of title to property] would, if the acts involved were declared invalid, often be likely to give offense to the expropriating country; since the concept of territorial sovereignty is so deep-seated, any state may resent the refusal of the courts of another sovereign to accord validity to acts within its territorial borders." 376 U.S. at 431-32.

Absent evidence of some conscious act by the Cuban sovereign that would be disregarded, a decision allowing petitioner to recover on its counterclaim should do little to embarrass the Cuban government. Indeed, the Cuban government has never formally interposed a defense based on its internal law with respect to this matter. When Dunhill recovered a claim against the interventors in the District Court greater than the interventors' award against Dunhill, the District Court, by oversight, failed to grant an affirmative judgment for Dunhill. Dunhill moved to correct this. If any act of state had occurred which precluded compliance with any relief that might be ordered, that was the point in the proceedings at which the inter-

ventors should have raised such opposition. Yet, as the Court noted in granting Dunhill affirmative relief.

> "The interventors have submitted no papers in opposition and do not appear to oppose this application." J. App., 74a.*

Further, it can hardly be an affront to a foreign sovereign to prevent its unjust enrichment at the expense of an innocent third party when the sovereign has itself selected the forum in which to litigate the issues. As suggested by the Court in *National City Bank* v. *Republic of China*, 348 U.S. 356 (1955):

> "We have a foreign government invoking our law but resisting a claim against it which fairly would curtail its recovery. It wants our law, like any other litigant, but it wants our law free from the claims of justice." 348 U.S. at 361-62.

If Cuba is willing to present to the U.S. courts the issue of its entitlement to compensation for shipments, it should be no affront to its sovereignty that related claims are adjudicated and recoveries applied to their satisfaction—particularly in light of the equities here present.

3. *Uncertainty in International Trade.* The Court in *Sabbatino* stated:

> "Another serious consequence . . . would be to render uncertain titles in foreign commerce, with the possible consequence of altering the flow of international trade." 376 U.S. at 433.

To recognize the statements of counsel as an act of state would not avoid serious alterations to the flow of international trade; it could cause such alterations. For if a statement of counsel is recognized as an act of state, any dispute arising out of a commercial transaction with a foreign government can be immunized from full judicial review in the courts of the United States. We are entering an era marked by a vast increase in commercial dealings between United States nationals and foreign governments—often involving transactions of massive proportions. Under the holding of the Court of Appeals, in disputes arising out of such transactions, our courts will be available to grant relief against the American national, but, with a word from opposing counsel, not in his favor. This is distinctly contrary to current trends in decided cases and to the views of the executive departments. *See infra*, pp. 18-20.

4. *Ease of a Judicial Remedy.* The Court in *Sabbatino* suggested that where the chances for effectuating a judicial remedy are slight, there is reason to invoke the act of state doctrine. 376 U.S. at 431. This was but another way of saying that where sensitive political issues are involved in the adjudication of a case, a court's decision might have no practical impact. This would only embarrass all concerned and denigrate the courts. However, in the instant case, this Court can reach a decision which is easily implemented. A decision for Dunhill would simply permit it to set off the amount of its counterclaim from the pool of funds which the other importers in the instant case owe to the Cuban government.

5. *Codification or Consensus Concerning Law.* The Court stated in *Sabbatino*:

> "It should be apparent that the greater the degree of codification or consensus concerning a particular area of international law, the more appropriate it is for the judiciary to render decisions regarding it . . . ." 376 U.S. at 428.

* The interventors also could have expressed such opposition in their reply to Dunhill's amended answer, which expressly set forth a counterclaim seeking this judgment. Appendix, pp. 14-18. Although given the opportunity to file such a reply (*Id.*, pp. 19-22) they failed to do so.

The instant case concerns commercial transactions by government agencies. It is a dynamic area of the law, in which concepts of amenability to suit and responsibility for the payment of judgments have been increasingly accepted by all countries. Unlike the situations in *Sabbatino* and *First National City Bank*, in which the validity of a politically sensitive expropriation was involved, no such issue is before the Court in the instant case. Rather the sole issue is Cuba's right to keep the proceeds of Dunhill's payments to which the courts below have found Cuba was never entitled.

There is no better reflection of the current law on the legal responsibilities of foreign states in commercial activities than legislation sponsored by the State and Justice Departments now pending before the Congress which seek to codify what has become United States and general international practice.* These bills would (a) codify into law the so-called "restrictive theory" of sovereign immunity, which the United States has followed since 1952,** and clearly render commercial agencies of foreign governments, such as the interventors here, amenable to suit in the United States in connection with commercial transactions entered into or having an effect within this country, (b) enable litigants not only to obtain valid service on such agencies, but also to obtain execution of judgments against the assets of such commercial agencies, and (c) shift from the executive departments to the courts the responsibility for determining whether claims of immunity from suit or execution of judgment are to be recognized. Cases now abound in which the courts of this country have adjudicated claims against commercial agencies or entities of foreign governments. It is the rare case that attracts attention from the press and commentators in which the

* S. 566 and H.R. 3493, 93d Cong., 1st Sess. (1973).

** *See* Statement of Hon. Charles N. Brower, Legal Advisor Department of State. *House Judiciary Committee Hearings on H.R. 3493*, 93d Cong., 1st Sess. at 15 (1973).

United States government presses claims of immunity for a foreign government.* But this well-defined trend and its proposed codification would be wholly emasculated if it could be easily evaded through the spontaneous, unsupported assertions of litigation counsel that their clients will refuse to pay judgments the courts render.

C. Permitting counsel's statements to constitute an "act of state" would allow foreign states to claim immunity in cases in which the defense of sovereign immunity would not be recognized.

In this case, the Court of Appeals in effect granted Cuba the sovereign immunity it could not otherwise effectively plead. The Court simply assumed that Cuba's possible refusal to recognize liability for this claim precluded our courts from requiring Cuba to do so. Yet had Cuba attempted to raise the defense of sovereign immunity, it would have found:

(1) the doctrine is not available with respect to a commercial activity such as the sale of non-governmental goods [*see* S. 566, 93d Cong., 1st Sess. (1973)]; (2) the doctrine is not available with respect to a counterclaim, regardless of amount, arising from the same subject matter as that sued upon; (3) the doctrine cannot be invoked after the merits of the controversy (here, Cuba's receipt of the moneys paid) have been placed in issue; and (4) the doctrine is generally not applied without a suggestion of immunity filed by the State Department at the request of the foreign sovereign, and here, as far as the record discloses, no such request was made by Cuba and no suggestion of immunity was filed by the State Department. To the extent the latter has indicated any views it would allow full adjudication of Dunhill's claim. *See* RESTATEMENT (SECOND), FOREIGN RELATIONS LAW OF THE UNITED STATES, §§ 69, 70(2)(b) and 71(1).

* *See, e.g.*, Note, *Sovereign Immunity—The Case of the "Imias"*, 68 AM. J. INT'L L. 280 (1974); *Rich* v. *Noviera Vacuba*, 295 F.2d 24 (4th Cir. 1961).

To find for the Republic of Cuba in the instant case thus will revive in another guise what has become a limited sovereign immunity doctrine.* In any case in which a foreign sovereign would wish to avoid judgment against it, it could simply have its counsel stand up in a courtroom and state that the sovereign power's position is that it is not liable for payment, and such an action by counsel will be deemed an "act of state." By simply having counsel come forward in court and state a litigating position, his client would be found immune from suit. For such a result there is no precedent, no logic and no justice.

II.

Assuming that the statements of counsel for the Republic of Cuba that Dunhill's unjust enrichment counterclaim would not be honored do constitute an act of state, an exception to the act of state doctrine was created, under *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), where Dunhill's counterclaim does not exceed the net balance owed to Cuba by Dunhill's co-defendants and where all claims and counterclaims arise out of the subject matter in litigation in this case.

Dunhill is entitled to obtain a judgment for the difference between the amount it owed to the interventors and the amount it previously paid to the interventors for pre-intervention shipments. Even if Cuba had acted to bar Petitioner's claim, the opinions of the majority in *First*

* For discussions of the increasingly narrow limits governments and courts have placed on the sovereign immunity rule, *see Victory Transport Inc.* v. *Comisaria General de Abastecimientos y Transportes*, 336 F.2d 354 (2d Cir. 1964), *cert. denied*, 381 U.S. 934 (1965); Sklaver, *Sovereign Immunity in the United States: An Analysis of S. 566*, 8 INT'L LAWYER 408 (1974); *Hearings, supra*, p. 18.

National City Bank indicate the act of state doctrine should not be applied:

> (a) if no embarrassment to American foreign relations will ensue from a failure to do so, and
>
> (b) if its application would be fundamentally unfair.

Both conditions are present in the case at bar. Indeed, the facts of this case are even stronger than in *First National City Bank*.

A. The court is not barred by the act of state doctrine from considering Dunhill's counterclaim where such consideration will not interfere with American foreign relations.

It is obvious that the question of unjust enrichment being litigated in this case is not a political one. Rather, the issue is virtually identical to the other issues which Cuba voluntarily submitted for judicial resolution by the courts of the United States. The context of this case is purely commercial; there has been no political act by any foreign sovereign; the Cuban government has merely—and belatedly—repudiated an obligation which arose out of a commercial transaction. The concerns of the Court, as reflected in the *Sabbatino* decision, are simply not relevant. This suit is in fact and law an ordinary commercial litigation in which the plaintiff, suing on a series of claims, should be subject to all of the counterclaims asserted by the defendants arising out of essentially the same series of transactions. As this Court has noted, the cases which establish the act of state doctrine

> "[justify] its existence primarily on the basis that juridical review of acts of state of a foreign power could embarrass the conduct of foreign relations by the political branches of the government." *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. at 765.

That consideration is wholly inapposite here. The liability of the parties has already been fully litigated. Neither the Cuban government nor the political branches of our government have taken any official steps to suggest to the courts that the issues presented are inappropriate for judicial determination. Compare the situation in the case of the "Imias"*, in which both governments showed no hesitation about representing to the court that it should keep its hands off.** Allowing Dunhill to set off its counterclaim against the payments its co-defendants are to make will not involve the Court in the question of the validity of a foreign sovereign's acts. It will not "interfere with delicate foreign relations conducted by the political branches." *Id.*, 406 U.S. at 775 (Powell, J., concurring).

The plurality opinion in *First National City Bank* held that "where the Executive Branch . . . expressly represents to the Court that application of the act of state doctrine would not advance the interests of American foreign policy, that doctrine should not be applied by the courts." 406 U.S. at 768. While that case was pending, the Court received a letter from the State Department advising that

> "the act of state doctrine should not be applied to bar consideration of a defendant's counterclaim or set-off against the Government of Cuba in this or like cases." *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *First National City Bank*, 442 F.2d 530, 538 (2d Cir. 1971), *rev'd on other grounds*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972).

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* *Industria Azucarera Nacional & Compania de Refineria* v. *Empresa Navegacion Manbisa* (Civ. No. 7902, D.C.Z. Nov. 1, 1973), noted in 68 AM. J. INT'L L. 280 (1974).

** In *Republic of China*, the Court pointed out that "the State Department is the normal means of suggesting to the courts that a sovereign be granted immunity from a particular suit. . . . Its failure or refusal to suggest such immunity has been accorded significant weight by this Court." *National City Bank* v. *Republic of China*, 348 U.S. at 360.

Although no comparable express representation has been received by the courts in this case, the rationale of Legal Advisor Stevenson's letter and the Court's acceptance of it would seem to apply precisely to this "like case."

B. Fundamental considerations of fairness require that the Court allow Dunhill to set off its counterclaim against the amounts owed to Cuba by its co-defendants.

Sovereign immunity and act of state are court-imposed limitations on their ability to do justice. Accordingly, these doctrines are construed narrowly. They may require individuals to forego adjudication of their otherwise legally cognizable claims to prevent judicial interference with foreign policy. But in an era marked by a vast increase in commercial transactions between American nationals and foreign sovereigns, the Court should not allow these doctrines to become devices by which foreign sovereigns can repudiate their commercial obligations with impunity. The executive has indicated its position in this case—by making no protest to the courts; the legislature is considering S. 566 and H.R. 3493 by whose principles this case is clearly governed. *See, supra*, p. 18. A denial of Dunhill's full counterclaim would be a judicial deviation from this well marked path. It would require an unnecessarily broad application of the act of state doctrine.

More than that, it would be patently unfair if Cuba could collect the amount owed for the post-intervention shipments without subjecting itself to liability for the money it mistakenly received for pre-intervention shipments. As this Court has previously held in *Republic of China:*

> "a counterclaim based on the subject matter of a sovereign's suit is allowed to cut into the doctrine of immunity." 348 U.S. at 364.

The claims and counterclaims being litigated in this action arise out of the same subject matter and involve parallel situations. They all have been tried in the same suit. The Cuban government raised no objection when the suits were consolidated for trial and in fact had the benefit and convenience of litigating a single suit. As Judge Mansfield pointed out in the court below:

> "[S]ince the counterclaim here . . . arises out of a course of dealing with respect to the same subject matter . . . between the same parties or their successors . . . the equities here balance much more heavily in favor of the importers than in the *First National City Bank* case where the counterclaim arose out of a wholly unrelated factual context." J. App., 30a.

Furthermore, the counterclaims which arise out of the same subject matter as Cuba's claims clearly do not exceed the amount of the claim voluntarily put in controversy by the Cuban government, thus avoiding the situation which concerned this Court in *Sabbatino*.* Allowing Dunhill to recover its full counterclaim will not frustrate the aim of the act of state doctrine. Cuba has put an amount of almost $700,000 in controversy in this suit. The doctrine of *First National City Bank* authorizes counterclaims up to that amount.

It cannot be argued that Dunhill will receive a windfall if the Court allows a recovery. It has already been resolved that Dunhill is entitled to recover the money mistakenly paid to Cuba. Furthermore, it has also been resolved that the owners are entitled to payment by Dunhill for the pre-intervention shipments. To the extent that Dunhill cannot recover on its counterclaim, it will be forced

* Cuba's claims against the importers total $699,788.56. J. App., 44a. The total amount of the unjust enrichment counterclaims is $477,200. J. App., 45a.

to pay twice—with interest—once to the owners and again to the interventors. Conversely the interventors will be entitled to retain funds the courts correctly held were paid to them by mistake. The fundamental unfairness of such a result is clear.

C. The Stevenson letter supports the conclusion that an adjudication of Dunhill's counterclaim should not be barred by the act of state doctrine.

The plurality opinion in *First National City Bank* relied heavily on a letter from the State Department authorizing judicial resolution of the counterclaim then before the Court. The conclusion expressed in that letter is applicable no less to the instant case.

The letter itself extends beyond the immediate case to "like cases." *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *First National City Bank*, 442 F.2d at 538. It was clearly the opinion of the State Department that American foreign policy did not require restricting the letter's applicability only to the case then at bar.

Furthermore, the case currently before the Court presents an even stronger argument for the application of the policy expressed in that letter. The commercial nature of the transaction, the absolute impossibility that the decision will interfere with foreign relations or embarrass the Executive Branch, and the willingness of the Cuban government to submit to American courts the resolution of its claims arising out of the same subject matter—all these factors make this case even more appropriate than *First National City Bank* for an adjudication of Dunhill's counterclaim without the constraints of the act of state doctrine.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated, it is respectfully submitted that the judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit be reversed insofar as it reversed in part the judgment entered in favor of Petitioner, Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc., against the Respondents, the Republic of Cuba and Daniel Solano Pinera, as Interventor.

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IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

—against—

THE REPUBLICA OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA,
As Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR RESPONDENTS

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IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1973

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

—against—

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, As Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

BRIEF FOR RESPONDENTS

Questions Presented

1. Was the petition for certiorari improvidently granted in that

(a) under the applicable Cuban Assets Control Regulations (31 C.F.R. § 515 et seq.) there are no assets on which an affirmative judgment for petitioner could be executed;

(b) the questions posed by this Court in granting the petition cannot be briefed on the record in this case because they make assumptions which have no foundation, and

(c) the petition herein raises but a few of a number of closely interlocking issues in a complex litigation and an adequate review of the issues herein is not possible in isolation from the questions raised in other petitions for certiorari pending in this Court. See *Republic of Cuba, et al.* v. *Menendez, et al.*, No. 73-1287, and *Saks and Company, et al.* v. *Republic of Cuba*, No. 73-1289.

If the writ be not dismissed, the proper questions for presentation on the merits are as follows:

2. Does the course of conduct engaged in by respondents in accepting, in Cuba, the payments made by petitioner and in refusing to repay, under a claim of entitlement based upon a valid nationalization decree, constitute an act of state within the doctrine of *Banco Nacional* v. *Sabbatino*, 376 U.S. 398?

3. If so, should there be an exception to the act of state doctrine which would permit petitioner to obtain any judgment on a counterclaim? If such exception is to be made, should it be further extended to allow an affirmative judgment where judgment on said counterclaim does not exceed the total net balance owed to Cuba on its claims against other defendants in other actions when said claims arose out of transactions similar to those on which petitioner's counterclaim is based and when the cases of petitioner and said other defendants were consolidated for purposes of trial only?

Counter Statement of Facts

By decree dated September 15, 1960 four Cuban-owned cigar manufacturers which had been selling cigars to petitioner were nationalized (or "intervened") and their assets

were taken over by the government-appointed interventor, respondent Daniel Solano Pinera. For about four months thereafter petitioner continued to purchase cigars from the interventor, most of which were not paid for. Early in 1961 the four dispossed Cuban owners of the cigar factories sued petitioner, in four separate actions, for cigars which, they claimed, had been delivered to petitioner but not paid for, and for trademark infringement.

Before any further proceedings could be taken in those cases, the interventor sued the former owners for a determination of the respective rights of the parties to the purchase price of the cigars and the use of the trademarks. In that action, entitled *Palicio* v. *Brush and Bloch*, 256 F. Supp. 481 (S.D.N.Y. 1966), *aff'd*, 375 F. 2d 1011 (2nd Cir. 1967), *cert. den.*, 389 U.S. 830 (1967), the court held that the nationalization decree did not raise any question of international law, and that the interventor was entitled to the purchase price of the post-intervention shipments of cigars, but that he did not own and could claim no rights under the trademarks. Pending the decision in the *Palicio* case, the original four actions by the former owners against petitioner were held in abeyance.

Following the decision in *Palicio*, the district court consolidated the four actions against petitioner, and permitted the respondents to intervene therein to press their claims against petitioner for the post-intervention shipments.[1]

Up to this point (May 16, 1967) and for several months thereafter, neither petitioner nor respondents nor the District Court, were aware that the former owners had a substantial claim against petitioner arising from the pre-intervention sale of cigars and therefore none of the parties

1. There is no dispute as to respondents' right to payment for post-intervention shipments.

anticipated the issue now before this Court. As a result of discovery proceedings and other steps taken in connection with preparation for trial, the following picture, not foreseen in the *Palicio* litigation, developed:

(1) There were substantial pre-intervention shipments of cigars to petitioner for which the former owners had not received payment, and for which they claimed payment from petitioner.

(2) Petitioner claimed to have paid respondent-interventor for such shipments, and argued that the former owners, by their conduct, had forfeited any right to payment.

(3) The respondents claimed that they were entitled to payment for the pre-intervention shipments because the nationalization decree of September 15, 1960 had nationalized all assets of the cigar companies, including accounts receivable.

The district court disposed of these issues by holding that:

(a) the former owners, and not the interventor, were entitled to payment from petitioner for pre-intervention shipments;

(b) the former owners were not estopped from claiming such payment;

(c) the petitioner had paid the respondent-interventor for pre-intervention shipments by mistake;

(d) the respondents were therefore obligated to return to petitioner the money paid by mistake;

(e) since the amount of the pre-intervention payments by petitioner exceeded by $53,000 the amount due to Cuba for post-intervention shipments,

the district court directed an affirmative judgment in favor of petitioner against respondents for that sum.

On appeal, the Court of Appeals considered all of the above issues and several others and sustained the district court as to all of the issues except (e). As to that issue, the Court of Appeals held that an affirmative judgment was not proper. All of the other issues in the case (a, b, c and d above, as well as a number of others) are the subject of two other petitions for writs of certiorari pending before this Court (Nos. 73-1287 and 73-1289). No action has been taken by the Court on those petitions.

Relevant Regulations

Relevant portions of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. § 515 et seq. are set forth in Appendix A hereto.

Summary of Argument

I. The petition for certiorari was improvidently granted and the writ ought now to be dismissed because:

(1) Under the provisions of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. § 515, et seq., there are no assets of Cuba against which the petitioner can collect any affirmative judgment it may secure in this case. Hence, although a justiciable question is presented, the case is moot so far as any practical benefit to petitioner is concerned;

(2) The questions put by this Court in its order of May 13, 1974 granting the petition for certiorari are not raised by the record and hence cannot be briefed except as abstract academic inquiries. In addition, the meaning of the second question posed by this Court is unclear, but it seems to be based upon an inaccurate assumption, namely,

that this Court in *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (hereinafter "*Citibank*"), adopted some sort of "counterclaim exception" to the act of state doctrine;

(3) The Court, in granting this petition, left undecided two companion petitions which raise questions of law which interlock with those in the instant case. The Court's action results in uncertainty as to what effect a decision on this petition will have on the entire controversy, and raises the possibility of long-continued litigation before final resolution can be had.

II. On the merits, this record properly raises the question of whether the course of conduct followed by respondent Republic of Cuba constitutes an act of state under the doctrine of *Banco Nacional de Cuba* v. *Sabbatino* 376 U.S. 398. Respondent urges that Cuba's receipt of monies paid to it and its refusal to surrender those monies in reliance on its interpretation of the decree of the Cuban government which nationalized Cuban-owned tobacco factories, constitutes a classic act of state, the validity of which cannot be reviewed by the courts of the United States.

III. Contrary to the suggestion which may be contained in the second question put by the Court, there is no exception to the act of state doctrine which will permit petitioner even to maintain its counterclaim, much less to secure an affirmative judgment on it. A majority of this Court in the *Citibank* case, *supra*, expressly disapproved any counterclaim exception to the rule set down in *Sabbatino*. Even those members of the Court who advocated a counterclaim exception expressly disapproved any rule which would permit an affirmative judgment on such a counterclaim. There is nothing in this record to justify an extension of a counterclaim exception (which exception was expressed most clearly in the concurring opinion of Mr. Justice Douglas in the *Citibank* case) to permit an affirmative judgment here. The mere fact that several separate and independent cases were, as a matter of convenience, tried jointly does not permit petitioner to measure its recovery against the aggregate of judgments secured in all the cases to determine whether its judgment is "affirmative".

The granting of a counterclaim exception and the expansion of that exception to include petitioner's claims here will result in the frustration of Congressional and Executive intent in devising a program for the marshalling of Cuban assets.

ARGUMENT

POINT I

The writ of certiorari was improvidently issued and should now be dismissed.

We respectfully suggest to this Court that the petition for a writ of certiorari granted on May 13, 1974 in this matter was improvidently granted, and that the writ should be dismissed for three reasons:

A. The Issue Presented By This Writ Is, In Practical Terms, Moot So Far As Petitioner Is Concerned.

The district court awarded petitioner, on its counterclaim, an affirmative judgment of about $53,000 plus interest over and above the amount of respondents' claim against petitioner. The Court of Appeals, in affirming the district court generally, reversed as to that single item. The question before this Court therefore is whether petitioner shall have judgment in its favor against the respondents in said sum.

Although a theoretical question of law is presented by the record this issue is, in practical terms, moot as to petitioner because for the foreseeable future, and perhaps forever, there is no way in which petitioner can collect on that judgment.

A short review of the background of the handling of claims of United States nationals against other foreign countries is in order. Although there has been no agreement or settlement with Cuba, there is enough history to establish clearly the relevant policy of the United States with respect to this subject.

The techniques adopted by our government to settle foreign claims has historically consisted of three steps, the second and third of which may be taken in reverse order.

(1) The assets of the foreign country and its nationals in the United States have been frozen, subject only to a license issued by the Treasury Department. Executive Order No. 8389 of April 10, 1940, set down as a note to 12 U.S.C. § 95a; 31 C.F.R. § 500 et seq. A similar regulation has been promulgated freezing Cuban funds, 31 C.F.R., § 515 et seq.; see Appendix A to this brief.

(2) Congress has provided machinery for the registration of claims by American citizens against the nationals of the foreign power in question and for the payment of those claims out of the frozen funds, 22 U.S.C. § 1621 et seq. Similar machinery has been set up in the case of Cuba, 22 U.S.C. § 1643 et seq, except that in the case of Cuba there is no agreement for the payment of claims and the statute makes no provision for payment.

(3) A treaty or executive agreement has been entered into between the United States and the foreign power. The

prototype of such an agreement was the Litvinov Agreement with the Soviet Union in 1933; since World War II a series of similar agreements have been entered into between the United States and other countries which have nationalized property owned by United States nationals. See Executive Agreement between United States and Bulgaria, 1963, 14 U.S.T. 969; Executive Agreement between United States and Poland, 1960, 11 U.S.T. 1953; Executive Agreement between United States and Rumania, 1960, 11 U.S.T. 317; Executive Agreement between United States and Yugoslavia, 1948, 62 Stat. 2658, T.I.A.S. 1803; Executive Agreement between the United States and Italy, 1947, 61 Stat. 3962, T.I.A.S. 1757.

This third step, of course, is missing in connection with claims against Cuba.

From the point of view of the United States, this policy can be effectuated only if (1) the collection of claims by nationals of the United States against foreign countries outside the machinery provided by the joint action of the Executive and Legislative Branches is prohibited, and (2) the integrity of the frozen funds is maintained to the greatest extent possible. The first of these conditions has been accomplished in the past by providing, in the relevant executive agreement, that the United States waives any claims any of its citizens may have against the foreign sovereign. Such provisions have been included in each of the treaties mentioned above. This makes it impossible for a creditor to proceed directly against the sovereign and the only way in which he can collect is through the distribution of the frozen funds by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

The second condition has been accomplished by the policy of the Treasury Department in refusing the free

grant of licenses for the release of frozen funds. See *Sardino* v. *Federal Reserve Bank*, 361 F. 2d 106 (2d Cir. 1966), *cert. den.* 385 U.S. 898.

After the petition was granted in this proceeding, we were advised by counsel for the petitioner that he had discussed with the Acting Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (the representative of the Department of Treasury charged with enforcing the Regulations) the possibility that any judgment issued in favor of the petitioner could be enforced by execution on any assets of the Cuban Government, and specifically on the claim of Cuba against Faber, Coe & Gregg, one of the other tobacco importers. He was advised, we understand, that such a license would *not* be issued. Subsequently counsel for respondents wrote to the Office of Foreign Assets Control to confirm his understanding that such was the policy of the Office. The inquiry was made on July 1, 1974 and an answer was received dated August 1, 1974. Copies of both letters are annexed hereto in Appendix B.

The petitioner here has never filed a claim with the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, and it is too late to do so now.[2] Instead petitioner has proceeded quite independently to seek the judgment awarded by the District Court. So whether or not petitioner gets a judgment here, if past practice is to be followed it would not be eligible to participate in the distribution of the frozen funds.[3]

2. The deadline was May 1, 1967.

3. The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission reports that 5,911 claims against Cuba, totalling $1,799,548,568.69, have been filed and approved by the Commission. (Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, Annual Report, 1972, p. 412.) There is no recent census of the value of Cuban assets which have been frozen, though a census was taken by the Office of Foreign Assets Control as of the date of the freeze in 1963. It is difficult to analyze that census and

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This is a busy court and it is concerned with important issues. It ought not to devote its energies to the determination of points of law which, however interesting they may be, are in practical terms, academic. Supreme Court Rules, Rule 19(a); *Rice* v. *Sioux City Cemetery*, 349 U.S. 70, 74; Address of Chief Justice Vincent before American Bar Association, Sept. 7, 1949, quoted in Stern & Gressman, *Supreme Court Practice*, 4th Ed., p. 150.

B. The Issues Framed by the Court Are Not Issues Raised By the Record and Cannot Be Intelligently Briefed.

The two issues framed by the Court in its order granting the petition for writ of certiorari are:

> "1. Can statements by counsel for the Republic of Cuba, that petitioner's unjust enrichment counterclaim would not be honored, constitute an act of state?
>
> 2. If so, is an exception to the act of state doctrine created, under *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972), where petitioner's counterclaim does not exceed the net balance owed to Cuba on its claims by petitioner's co-defendants, and where all claims and counterclaims arise out of the subject matter in litigation in this case?"

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arrive at a reliable net figure. A total of $148,800,000 of Cuban assets was reported, of which only $19,600,000 was the property of the Cuban Government and its agencies. Even this is a gross, not a net, figure. Much of the balance is in the form of choses in action, which may, or may not, have value. (Treasury Department, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Census of Blocked Cuban Assets in the United States. Undated.)

We most respectfully suggest that neither of these issues can be briefed or argued on this record, as both issues make assumptions which have no foundation.

1. The first question put by the Court would require respondents to defend a legal position they have never advanced at any time in this litigation. Neither the respondents nor the Court of Appeals nor anyone else has ever said that "statements of counsel . . . constitute[d] an act of state" and it is unreasonable to ask respondents to brief that question.

The role of counsel for the Republic of Cuba in this case has been no different from the role of counsel in any other case. Counsel has presented to the Court the legal position of his client. The Republic of Cuba takes the legal position that its conduct in collecting the funds in question from petitioner in Cuba, and in refusing to repay it, on the grounds urged here constituted an act of state (*infra*, p. 16). Counsel did nothing but transmit that view to the district court and to the Court of Appeals. Counsel's role in his case was the same as his role in the *Sabbatino* or *Citibank* cases or any other case before this Court.

The Court of Appeals held that the respondents' conduct constituted an act of state. Respondents shall, in Point II herein, address themselves to that point, although we are not at all sure that this Court issued its writ to review that issue. We canot address ourselves to the point framed by this Court because respondents have never contended that statements of counsel "constituted" an act of state and we respectfully decline to be drawn into a debate over that proposition.

2. The second question put by this Court likewise cannot be briefed:

(1) It assumes an affirmative answer to question 1, which is itself not a proper issue.

(2) It refers to a balance owed to Cuba "by petitioner's co-defendants." Petitioner had no "co-defendants." This case was started in 1961 when four actions were filed, all against petitioner. In 1966, the four actions were consolidated into a single proceeding against petitioner, and respondents were allowed to intervene as parties-plaintiff. There was never more than one defendant in this action.[4]

It is true that this action and two others[5] were tried together in 1969, but no order of consolidation of these three actions was ever entered in the district court. A joint trial was agreed upon for the convenience of the court and counsel, since most of the legal (but not the factual) issues were common to all cases, and the appeal was argued jointly for the same reason. But the defendants in the other cases were in no sense "co-defendants." Each defendant filed separate pleadings; each defendant was represented by its own counsel; each defendant filed its own brief and made its own argument in the district court, and three separate judgments were entered. Only one of the three defendants made this application for a writ of certiorari, although, as is noted above, there is another petition pending (No. 73-1289) in which all defendants have joined.

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4. When the four actions against petitioner were commenced in 1961, a corporate affiliate of petitioner, Dunhill International, Inc. was joined as a party defendant. That affiliate was dropped from the case by stipulation in 1967. We assume that the reference to co-defendants was not intended to refer to Dunhill International.

5. *Menendez et al* v. *Saks & Co.*, 61 Civ. 3336 and *Cifuentes* v. *Faber, Coe & Gregg*, 61 Civ. 472.

(3) The question posed by this Court apparently assumes that some sort of "exception to the act of state doctrine [was] created under *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972)" relating to counterclaims.[6] There was no such exception to the act of state doctrine created by that case or any other. Quite the contrary—this Court refused to create such an exception in the *Citibank* case.

This Court will recall the several opinions in that case. Five justices (BRENNAN, STEWART, MARSHALL, BLACKMUN and POWELL, *JJ*) expressly rejected any counterclaim exception to the act of state doctrine (406 U.S. at 773, 793 *et seq.*) Three justices (BURGER, *CJ* and WHITE and REHNQUIST, *JJ*.) found an exception in the facts of that case, placing primary reliance on a letter written by the Legal Advisor of the State Department. (406 U.S. at 764). No such letter was written here and certainly Mr. Stevenson's letter in the *Citibank* case does not reach the issues in this case. See p. 24 *infra*.

Only one justice, Mr. Justice Douglas, took the position that there was a counterclaim exception to the act of state doctrine. (406 U.S. at 771) With all due respect, we submit that the conclusion reached in his opinion was incorrect.

We will argue in Point III herein that there is, and should be, no counterclaim exception to the act of state doctrine, and that even if there is to be such an exception, it should not be applied here. Here, again, we are not at all sure that this Court issued its writ in order to review that question.

6. The question posed by the Court is somewhat ambiguous, but if the Court is not making such an assumption, the reference to the *Citibank* case is pointless.

C. The Issues in this Case Cannot be Considered Without Some Prior Disposition of the Other Petitions for Writs of Certiorari Relating to This Litigation.

It is clear from a reading of the lengthy opinions below that the legal issues herein[7] are unusually complex and interdependent so that any attempt to separate out any one of them must result in distortion. There are two other petitions for certiorari pending in this Court which raise some of those issues. The failure of the Court to grant or to deny those petitions makes it impossible to consider this petition in proper context.

For example, Cuba urges, in its petition for certiorari (No. 73-1287), that while the Court of Appeals was correct in holding that Cuba's act of state defense was sound, it erred in assuming that the *Citibank* decision had adopted a counterclaim exception to that defense. If Cuba is ultimately successful in its argument that there is no such exception, the present discussion about affirmative judgments is pointless, for Dunhill will not even be entitled to a judgment up to the amount of Cuba's judgment against it.

Equally important is a second petition, filed jointly by petitioner Dunhill and the other importers (Saks & Co. v. Republic of Cuba, No. 73-1289). In *that* petition, Dunhill argues that the former owners are estopped from asserting their right to recover for the purchase price of pre-intervention shipments. Should petitioners be successful in that argument, the former owners will get nothing for pre-intervention shipments and the judgments against Cuba (including Dunhill's judgment here) will fall.

We do not now argue for any particular resolution of those questions; we merely urge that to proceed with this

7. For purposes of this discussion, we will disregard the trade mark issues which are clearly separable from those raised by this petition.

case, while leaving the other questions in abeyance makes no sense at all.

We suggest that a proper resolution of these issues requires either:

1) the granting of all three petitions;

2) the denial of all three petitions;

3) the granting of some petitions and the denial of others.

The Court has adopted a fourth alternative: it has granted one petition and taken no action at all on the others. This could result in endless litigation and prolong for years this lawsuit which is already 13 years old.

POINT II

The Act of State Doctrine bars recovery of a judgment in favor of petitioner.

As we note elsewhere (*supra*, p. 12) the respondents have never contended that the in-court statements of respondents' counsel "constitute" an act of state. As petitioner agrees, counsel's in-court statements were "no more than statements of a litigating position" (Petitioner's Br., p. 5). There may be situations in which statements of counsel may constitute an act of state, but no such contention is made here.[8]

8. It follows that petitioner's reliance (Br. p. 12) on *Compania Espanola de Navegicon Maritima* v. *The Navemar*, 303 U.S. 68 (1938), is misplaced. The issue in that case was not whether the Court would accept the statement of the Ambassador of Spain as a statement of the government, but whether the statement of the government as transmitted to the Court by the ambassador was in fact

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Under our law a statement by counsel is deemed to have been authorized by his client. *Laird* v. *Air France Engine Service, Inc.*, 262 F. 2d 948 (5th Cir. 1959; *Vaccaro* v. *Alcoa S.S. Co.*, 405 F. 2d 1133 (2nd Cir. 1968). We have here counsel's advice to the Court that his client, the Republic of Cuba, is relying on the act of state doctrine as a defense to the claim of petitioner. Therefore, the proper question before this Court is whether the act of state defense is available on the facts of this case.

Petitioner argues that there was no "act" by the Republic of Cuba which could have constituted an act of state. But on the record here there is ample showing of an act of state by Cuba. The interventor, an agent of the state, accepted and retained the petitioner's payments for pre-intervention shipments.[9] Moreover, such money was accepted on a claim of right, namely that the decree of September 15, 1960 nationalized accounts receivable. Furthermore, the interventor has refused to repay the monies accepted by it, and still claims that he is entitled to that

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supported by the record. The Court found that it was not. The statement of an ambassador, like the statement of a lawyer, is not proof of anything. It is merely an assertion made by the representative of a sovereign as to the position taken by that sovereign in litigation.

9. Petitioner (Br., p. 3) persists in stating that "interventors' principal line of defense . . . was to dispute that they had ever received the money," although the two lower court opinions to which petitioner refers say no such thing. When the belated claim of the former owners for pre-intervention shipments was discovered in 1967, the interventors admitted receiving a portion of the payments. As to the balance, the relevant records had been destroyed, and so the interventors could neither affirm nor deny such receipt. The District Court found that the interventors had been paid the full amount and the Court of Appeals affirmed. That issue is therefore no longer in this case.

money by virtue of the nationalization decree.[10] It matters not that the interventor may be wrong in the eyes of the United States court. The act of state doctrine does not stand or fall on whether the sovereign is right under United States law.[11] Since the monies taken by the interventor were in Cuba, and he was a representative of the sovereign, it can hardly be denied that his conduct amounted to "a taking of property within its own territory by a foreign sovereign government." *Sabbatino* at p. 428.

It is agreed by all that an act of state need not be evidenced by any particular formality, and this Court, and others, have frequently found an act of state on much less than the conduct of Cuba in this case. So, in *Underhill* v. *Hernandez*, 168 U.S. 250,[12] the "act" of the state consisted of the detention of the plaintiff, and an assault on him committed by some soldiers of a revolutionary army in the field. Likewise, in *Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co.* 246 U.S. 297, and *Ricaud* v. *American Metal Co.*, 246 U.S. 304, the act of state was the physical seizure of property by soldiers in the field. See also *American Banana Co.* v. *United Fruit*, 213 U.S. 347.

We cannot see how the interventor's receipt of funds and his refusal to repay them under a claim that they were included in the nationalization decree is any the less an act of Cuba than General Villa's seizure of hides and their retention in the *Oetjen case* was an act of Mexico.

In *French* v. *Banco Nacional*, 23 N.Y. 2d 46 (1968), the Cuban government refused to pay certain obligations evidenced by certificates of indebtedness issued by Banco

10. See Petition for Certiorari filed by the interventor, No. 73-1287, pp. 4, 12-14.

11. As the Court of Appeals pointed out, "repudiation [of a debt] does not appear ever to have been recognized as a violation of international law." 485 F. 2d at 1370.

12. "The classic American statement of the act of state doctrine." *Banco Nacional* v. *Sabbatino, supra.*

Nacional. It argued that sovereign immunity applied; that the certificates of indebtedness did not really constitute a promise to pay; that a decree of the Currency Stabilization Fund had excused payment, and that the act of state doctrine banned judicial review of Cuba's repudiation of its debt. The Court of Appeals of New York found no sovereign immunity; it also found that the certificates in question were in fact promises to pay. There was some disagreement as to whether the decree of the Currency Stabilization Fund was valid and even as to whether it was applicable, but the majority of the Court of Appeals held that even if there had been no decree, Cuba's repudiation constituted an act of state. "[T]he act of state was the defendant's refusal to perform, . . ." 23 N.Y. 2d at 66.

The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit has likewise held that an act of state need not be a formal act of the government, but may consist of a course of conduct. In *Bernstein* v. *van Heyghen Freres, S.A.*, 163 F. 2d 246 (2nd Cir. 1947), *cert. den.*, 332 U.S. 772, no formal government act was alleged. Plaintiff claimed that unidentified "Nazi officials" had forced him to give up control of a corporation he owned. The Court held that there was an act of state. *Accord, United States ex rel. Heymann* v. *Watkins*, 159 F. 2d 650 (2nd Cir. 1947); *Union Shipping and Trading Co.* v. *United States*, 127 F. 2d 771 (2nd Cir. 1942); *Hewitt* v. *Speyer*, 250 F. 367 (2nd Cir. 1918). See also *Occidental Petroleum Corp.* v. *Buttes Gas and Oil Co.*, 331 F. Supp. 92 (C.D. Calif. 1971), *aff'd*, 461 F. 2d 1261 (9th Cir. 1972) *cert. den.* 409 U.S. 950; *Holzer* v. *Deutsche Reichsbahn-Gesellschaft*, 277 N.Y. 474 (1938).

The petitioner has confused the issue before this Court by extended reference to the doctrine of sovereign immunity (Br. pp. 17, 20). The doctrines of act of state and sovereign immunity are related and sometimes overlap, but they are not the same thing. There are many cases in

which sovereign immunity is a defense and act of state is not. For example, *Spacil* v. *Crowe*, 489 F. 2d 614 (5th Cir. 1974). There are other cases in which the converse is true. *French* v. *Banco Nacional, supra; Oetjen* v. *Central Leather Co., supra; Bernstein* v. *van Heyghen Freres, S.A., supra.* And, there are undoubtedly some situations in which both defenses are available.

But the principles behind the two doctrines are quite different. The act of state doctrine teaches that the courts of the United States will not inquire into the acts of a sovereign done within its territory. The doctrine of sovereign immunity teaches that a sovereign and its property may be immune from suit or attachment in some circumstances. As Mr. Justice Brennan points out in his dissent in *Citibank*, the application of the act of state doctrine relieves the Judicial Branch of the necessity of assessing claims under international law under circumstances which may interfere with the foreign relations of the United States. No such virtue attends the application of the doctrine of sovereign immunity. 406 U.S. at 789, fn. 13.

It follows that petitioner's argument, that the Court of Appeals "in effect granted Cuba the sovereign immunity it could not otherwise effectively plead" (Pet. Br., p. 19) is not well taken. Every case in which the sovereign successfully relies on an act of state (as in *Sabbatino*) results in a decision in favor of the sovereign. In many such cases, the defense of sovereign immunity would not be available to the sovereign as it may not have been available here.[13]

13. Just for the record, a word or two concerning the so-called restrictive doctrine of sovereign immunity may be appropriate. That doctrine derives from the Tate letter, 26 Dept. of State Bulletin 984 (1952), and has never been reviewed by this Court. Further, it has been disregarded both by the courts and the State Department itself in two recent cases, both involving Cuba; *Spacil* v. *Crowe, supra,* and

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But that fact in no way derogates from the applicability of the act of state defense.

Petitioner at pp. 14-19 of its brief seeks to break down the rationale of the *Sabbatino* decision into "five factors" and then proceeds to argue that none of these "factors" are applicable here. We suggest that such analysis is misleading and mistakes the thrust of the *Sabbatino* case.

Basic to the act of state doctrine is the principle that relations between states which affect both legal and political issues ought to be left to the Executive Branch of the government and that judicial review of the acts of a foreign state should not be undertaken in those kinds of cases in which the issues touch "sharply on national nerves" (*Sabbatino* at 428). There is a danger, said this Court, that in such cases there may be an affront to the foreign government and an interference with the ability of the executive to dispose of differences which may exist between the United States and the foreign government. One of the elements the Court looked to is the extent of codification or at least consensus concerning the particular area involved, as evidenced by treaties or uniform international practice.

The Court found in *Sabbatino* (at 430) and it is equally true here, that "it is difficult to imagine the courts of this country embarking on adjudication in an area which touches more sensitively the practical and ideological goals" of the members of the family of nations. And petitioner does not challenge the conclusion reached by the Court in *Sabbatino*

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Rich v. *Naviera Vacuba*, 197 F. Supp. 710 (E.D. Va. 1961), *aff'd* 295 F. 2d 24 (4th Cir. 1961). Certainly the pending bills, S.566 and H.R. 3493, 93rd Cong., 1st Sess., on which petitioner seems to place some reliance (Br., pp. 18-20) have nothing to do with this case. They relate to sovereign immunity, not to act of state, and they have not been enacted into law.

(at p. 428-430) that there is no consensus among the nations of the world as to the respective rights of the nationalizing country and the foreign property owners.[14]

One additional point is made in the *Sabbatino* case which is of substantial significance in this case. In *Sabbatino* this Court warned against the problems arising from "piecemeal disposition" of controversies between nations. In the present proceeding, petitioner is urging this Court not only to indulge in a piecemeal disposition of the claims of American creditors against Cuba, and cross-claims which Cuba may have against the United States or its nationals, but it is even urging the Court to engage in a piecemeal disposition of this very litigation by isolating one issue out of many. There is no doubt that a resolution of the differences between the United States and Cuba will some day be resolved by negotiation and, of course, such negotiation must be carried on by the Executive Branch. To attempt a piecemeal disposition of claims at this date is illustrative of the wisdom of the *Sabbatino* decision and the desirability of applying the act of state doctrine to this controversy.

POINT III

There is no justification for a "counterclaim exception" to the Act of State Doctrine; if an exception of any kind is appropriate, it ought not to encompass the facts of this case.

As we point out above (p. 14) this Court has never approved a "counterclaim exception" to the act of state

14. For reasons which are not clear to us, petitioner, in discussing the question of the codification of international law, makes reference, at page 18 of its brief, to bills pending in Congress on the subject of sovereign immunity. As we note above at p. 20, sovereign immunity is quite different from act of state, and, in any event, the proposed bills represent a proposed codification of United States law and not international law.

doctrine. The most that can be said is that in the *Citibank* case, *supra*, one Justice (Mr. Justice Douglas) approved such a counterclaim exception in broad terms at 406 U.S. 771); and that three other justices (Chief Justice Burger and Justices White and Rehnquist) approved an exception only when there was a "Bernstein/Stevenson" letter affirming the view of the State Department that its policy did not require the application of the act of state doctrine (at 406 U.S. at 764). The other five justices of the Court specifically disapproved a counterclaim exception to the *Sabbatino rule* (406 U.S. at 773, 793).

A. The *Citibank* Opinion of Mr. Justice Douglas.

With all due respect, we submit that the concurring opinion of Mr. Justice Douglas was in error; it ought not to be endorsed by the Court and should be reexamined by Mr. Justice Douglas himself. Acceptance of a counterclaim exception to the act of state doctrine is possible only if one is basically in disagreement with the *Sabbatino* decision. Every argument used by the Court in the *Sabbatino* case—the proper division of functions between the Judicial and Executive Branches; the possibility of embarrassment to the Executive Branch; the danger of touching upon the most "sensitive nerves" of a foreign power; the absence of codification or a consensus among the nations of the world as to the proper law on this subject;—all of these arguments have equal force whether a court is considering an original claim or a counterclaim.

There is only one possible argument in support of Mr. Justice Douglas' opinion and that is one based upon "fairness." But *every* application of the act of state doctrine, just like every application of the doctrine of sovereign immunity and, indeed, every judicial enforcement of cur-

rency control regulations is "unfair."[15] The question before the Court is not whether a result is fair or unfair to the litigants, but whether it is required by overriding considerations affecting the welfare of the United States. The *Sabbatino* decision gives the answer to that and we submit again with the greatest respect that the opinion of Mr. Justice Douglas in *Citibank* ignores it.

B. The Opinion of Mr. Justice Rehnquist

The opinion of Mr. Justice Rehnquist in the *Citibank* case likewise gives no support to the petitioner. We argued in that case and urge once again here that a "Bernstein letter" ought not to be considered by this Court in passing upon an act of state case and six of the nine justices on this bench agreed with us. *Cf. Dreyfus* v. *Von Finch*, — F. Supp. — (S.D.N.Y. May 20, 1974, No. 73 Civ. 5271). But quite aside from that, the Rehnquist opinion is not applicable here. We have no Bernstein letter and the letter submitted by the State Department in the *Citibank* case is in no way applicable to this case for three reasons:

(1) Mr. Stevenson's letter, even in its own terms, does not apply to this case because the State Department (like Mr. Justice Douglas) made it clear that any counterclaim exception to the act of state doctrine should *not* apply to an affirmative judgment against a foreign power.

15. Mr. Justice Douglas stated at p. 772 that "To allow recovery without more would permit Cuba to have its cake and eat it too." But Cuba will have no cake in this situation, as any recovery it gains will be frozen and will not be paid over except by an order of Congress or the Executive Branch. See *Sardino* v. *Federal Reserve Bank*, 361 F. 2d 106 (2nd Cir. 1966), *cert. den.*, 385 U.S. 898, in which this Court refused to review a decision of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals which was grossly and admittedly unfair to an aged Cuban worker because there were national policy considerations which outweighed any private interest plaintiff may have had.

(2) The letter in the *Citibank* case was written in 1970 and was based on the requirements of the "foreign policy interests of the United States." Obviously the foreign policy interests of the United States vary from time to time and by the time this case is heard more than four years will have passed since Mr. Stevenson wrote his letter to this Court. Those are four momentous years in the history of our country and in the development of its foreign policy, and there is no reason for believing that the foreign policy interests of the United States are the same now as they were at that time, especially in view of the silence from the State Department.

(3) The State Department letter in the *Citibank* case expressed policy of the Department "in this or like cases." 442 F. 2d at 538. The *Citibank* case involved the nationalization of Citibank's property in Havana. This case involves an action for unjust enrichment arising out of a commercial transaction. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Stevenson's letter in the *Citibank* case intended to encompass cases as unlike as these two litigations.

The petitioner, acting upon the suggestion inherent in the second question framed by this Court in granting the petition, has urged that the three cases which were tried together should be considered as a single case and that the aggregate judgment in favor of respondent in the two other cases be used as the standard against which the judgment of petitioner shall be measured in determining whether there is here an affirmative judgment in favor of petitioner. There are several reasons why this cannot be done:

First, as we note above, *supra*, p. 13, there are no "co-defendants" in this litigation. Four actions against petitioner were filed in the district court in 1961; in 1966, those four actions were consolidated into a single action against petitioner, and respondents were allowed to intervene as a

parties-plaintiff. Since there happened to be at the moment two other cases pending in the district court raising similar issues the three cases were tried together. Separate counsel represented each of the defendants; separate testimony was offered, and separate judgments were entered.

Second, in the extensive litigation in the Southern District of New York involving actions by and against Cuba there has been a considerable overlap of legal issues. The litigation by Cuba against First National City Bank and Chase Manhattan Bank involved issues which were in many respects identical. The cases involving sugar shipments raised another class of issues. Cases against tobacco importers raised still other kinds of issues. There are still pending and untried in the Southern District of New York still other litigation involving banks which raises still other issues. Most, if not all of the cases, raised one or another aspect of the act of state doctrine.

In the tobacco litigation of which petitioner's claim is part, the joint trial of three cases was found convenient because the same counsel represented all of the former owners, the same counsel represented the interventor in all three cases, and the three lawyers representing the importers were prepared to work together in a consolidated trial. But these three cases are not the only tobacco cases then pending in the Southern District and it is coincidence that these three cases happened to get tried together while the others were left out.[16]

In the cases against First National City Bank and Chase, the issues are likewise similar. Had history developed a bit differently those cases likewise could have been tried together and perhaps that would have been a

16. See *Tabacalera Cubana* v. *Chadbourne*, 61 Civ. 2301; *Tabacalera Cubana* v. *Faber, Coe & Gregg*, 66 Civ. 3477; *Romeo y Julietta* v. *Faber, Coe & Gregg*, 61 Civ. 1749; *Piedra* v. *Wood*, 61 Civ. 1177.

quicker and more convenient way of handling the legal and factual issues which had to be decided by the court. They were not consolidated for trial and, indeed, the Chase case has only just been tried in the district court while the First National City Bank case has already been decided in this Court.

Whether particular cases are tried together has nothing to do with the respective rights of the parties; such consolidation is merely a convenient tool for the economical use of the court's time. Petitioner's argument would lead to the result that First National City Bank could have secured an affirmative judgment against Banco Nacional in the *Citibank* case and enforced it against a judgment which Banco Nacional may get against Chase Manhattan. It is equally improper to urge that, under the so-called counterclaim exception recognized by a minority of this Court in the *Citibank* case, petitioner may get an affirmative judgment against Cuba because, for the convenience of everyone involved, the case happened to be tried together with two other cases.

Third, there is an interest involved here which has not been taken into consideration either by the petitioner or by the court in framing its question, and that is the interest of the other two branches of government. Congress and the Executive branch in concert have set up an elaborate program for the registration of claims against Cuba and the freezing of Cuban assets in the United States, presumably with the view of a possible ultimate settlement, similar to the settlement reached with other countries, which will utilize the frozen funds to pay off a portion of the claims. Supra, p. 8. We believe that in the *Citibank* case this Court did a disservice to that program and that the dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice Brennan, 406 U.S. at 794, was quite right in urging that failure to apply the act of

state doctrine resulted in a preference for a favored creditor. See also the Court of Appeals decision in *Citibank*, 442 F. 2d at 535.

The position taken by petitioner here thus offends national policy. Petitioner, a potential judgment-creditor against Cuba, evidently expects to be able to collect its claim by executing against a judgment in favor of Cuba against Faber, Coe & Gregg. First National Bank of Boston has submitted an amicus brief in this case; it evidently expects to collect a possible judgment in its favor by executing against a judgment Cuba may recover against Chase Bank, and has sought to attach Cuba's claim. If this leak in the dike is permitted it will not require much of a flood to wipe out all of the Cuban assets in the United States in a very short time, thus frustrating totally the policy of the Executive branch and of Congress.

If, on the other hand, the policy of the Executive and Legislative branches is to be maintained, everything that we are doing in connection with this pending petition is a total waste of time since the affirmative judgment for which petitioner is struggling so hard would have nothing against which it may execute.

CONCLUSION

The petition herein was improvidently granted and the Writ of Certiorari should be dismissed. Alternatively, the judgment of the Court of Appeals should be affirmed.

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New York, New York 10017

DORIAN BOWMAN
Of Counsel

August 29, 1974

Appendix A

Title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 515, entitled "Cuban Assets Control Regulations," in relevant part provide as follows:

§ 515.101 Relation of this part to other laws and regulations.

The Cuban Import Regulations issued on February 6, 1962, as amended, are hereby revoked and the following Regulations are hereby adopted in place thereof controlling all financial and commercial transactions involving Cuba or nationals thereof, provided that the revocation of the Cuban Import Regulations shall not be deemed to authorize any unlicensed importation prohibited by the Cuban Import Regulations and all penalties, forfeitures, and liabilities under such Regulations or any other applicable laws or regulations shall continue and may be enforced as if such revocation had not been made.

* * *

§ 515.201 Transactions involving designated foreign countries or their nationals; effective date.

(a) All of the following transactions are prohibited, except as specifically authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury (or any person, agency, or instrumentality designated by him) by means of regulations, rulings, instructions, licenses, or otherwise, if either such transactions are by, or on behalf of, or pursuant to the direction of a foreign country designated under this part, or any national thereof, or such transactions involve property in which a foreign country designated under this part, or any national thereof, has at any time on or since the effective date of this section had any interest of any nature whatsoever, direct or indirect:

(1) All transfers of credit and all payments between, by, through, or to any banking institution or banking institutions wheresoever located, with respect to any property subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or by any person (including a banking institution) subject to the jurisdiction of the United States;

(2) All transactions in foreign exchange by any person within the United States; and

(3) The exportation or withdrawal from the United States of gold or silver coin or bullion, currency or securities, or the earmarking of any such property, by any person within the United States.

(b) All of the following transactions are prohibited, except as specifically authorized by the Secretary of the Treasury (or any person, agency, or instrumentality designated by him) by means of regulations, rulings, instructions, licenses, or otherwise, if such transactions involve property in which any foreign country designated under this part, or any national thereof, has at any time on or since the effective date of this section had any interest of any nature whatesoever, direct or indirect:

(1) All dealings in, including, without limitation, transfers, withdrawals, or exportations of, any property or evidences of indebtedness or evidences of ownership of property by any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and

(2) All transfers outside the United States with regard to any property or property interest subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(c) Any transaction for the purpose or which has the effect of evading or avoiding any of the prohibitions set

forth in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section is hereby prohibited.

(d) For the purposes of this part, the term "foreign country designated under this part" and the term "designated foreign country" mean Cuba and the term "effective date" and the term "effective date of this section" mean with respect to Cuba, or any national thereof, 12:01 A.M., E.S.T., July 8, 1963.

• • •

§ 515.310 Transfer.

The term "transfer" shall mean any actual or purported act or transaction, whether or not evidenced by writing, and whether or not done or performed within the United States, the purpose, intent, or effect of which is to create, surrender, release, transfer, or alter, directly or indirectly any right, remedy, power, privilege, or interest with respect to any property and without limitation upon the foregoing shall include the making execution, or delivery of any assignment, power, conveyance, check, declaration, deed, deed of trust power of attorney, power of appointment, bill of sale, mortgage, receipt, agreement, contract, certificate, gift, sale, affidavit or statement; the appointment of any agent, trustee, or other fiduciary; the creation or transfer of any lien; the issuance, docketing, filing, or the levy of or under any judgment, decree, attachment, execution, or other judicial or administrative process or order, or the service of any garnishment; the acquisition of any interest of any nature whatsoever by reason of a judgment or decree of any foreign country; the fulfillment of any condition, or the exercise of any power of appointment, power of attorney, or other power.

Appendix A

§ 515.311 Property; property interests.

Except as defined in § 515.203(f) for the purposes of that section the terms "property" and "property interest" or "property interests" shall include, but not by way of limitation, money, checks, drafts, bullion, bank deposits, savings accounts, debts, indebtedness obligations, notes, debentures, stocks, bonds, coupons, any other financial securities, bankers' acceptances, mortgages, pledges, liens or other rights in the nature of security, warehouse receipts, bills of lading, trust receipts, bills of sale, any other evidences of title, ownership or indebtedness, powers of attorney, goods, wares, merchandise, chattels, stocks on hand, ships, goods on ships, real estate mortgages, deeds of trust, vendors' sales agreements, land contracts, real estate and any interest therein, leaseholds, ground rents, options, negotiable instruments, trade acceptances, royalties, book accounts, accounts payable, judgments, patents, trademarks, copyrights, contracts or licenses affecting or involving patents, trademarks or copyrights, insurance policies, safe deposit boxes and their contents, annuities, pooling agreements, contracts of any nature whatsoever, and any other property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or intangible, or interest or interests therein, present, future or contingent.

Appendix B

July 1, 1974

Mr. Stanley Sommerfield
Office of Foreign Assets Control
Treasury Department
Washington, D.C.

Re: Frozen Cuban Assets

Dear Mr. Sommerfield:

It has always been my understanding that the Office of Foreign Assets Control, as a matter of policy, would not permit a creditor of Cuba to collect a judgment by executing on frozen assets belonging to Cuba, whether those funds were in the bank accounts that we have maintained in the name of "Rabinowitz & Boudin Special for the Account of the Republic of Cuba and its Agencies" or they were in the possession of some debtor of Cuba. Such a license would obviously constitute a preference for the judgment-creditor and that, I would assume, would require a policy decision which has not yet been made either by Congress or by the Treasury Department.

The question has arisen several times in the past and most recently in connection with a claim by Dunhill & Co. against the Republic of Cuba. Dunhill had assumed that if it secured a judgment against Cuba, it could execute that judgment against money owing to Cuba from other creditors and it had in fact attempted to attach funds owing to Cuba by Faber, Coe & Gregg, another cigar importer whose claim is likewise in litigation. I advised counsel for Dunhill that I doubted that you would license execution on any judgment that Dunhill might obtain, but indicated that if you did approve, I would submit a settlement proposal to my clients. I later heard that counsel for Dunhill

had spoken to you and that you indicated that you would not approve such an execution; further, I now learn that my clients will not agree either.

It would be helpful if you would confirm my understanding that, generally speaking, you will not issue a license to permit a judgment-creditor of Cuba to execute against assets of Cuba which have been frozen pursuant to the Foreign Assets Control regulations. Such a confirmation by you of this policy will be helpful to me in dealing with both potential creditors of Cuba and the courts.

Sincerely yours,

VICTOR RABINOWITZ

VR:mc

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20220

FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL
IN REPLY REFER TO: FAC No. 77768

Aug. 1, 1974

Mr. Victor Rabinowitz
Rabinowitz, Boudin & Standard
30 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017
Dear Mr. Rabinowitz:

Reference is made to your letter of July 1, 1974 with respect to licensing execution on blocked Cuban assets.

This will confirm your understanding that in general it is not in accord with licensing policy under the Cuban

Assets Control Regulations to authorize a judgment-creditor of Cuba to execute against assets of Cuba which have been frozen pursuant to the Cuban Assets Control regulations.

Very truly yours,

STANLEY L. SOMMERFIELD
Acting Director
Office of Foreign Assets Control

Supreme Court, U. S.
FILED
AUG 8 1974
MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1974

No. 73-1288

ALFRED DUNHILL OF LONDON, INC.,

Petitioner,

v.

THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA and
DANIEL SOLANO PINERA, as Interventor,

Respondents.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

BRIEF OF BANK OF BOSTON INTERNATIONAL AS *AMICUS CURIAE*

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By consent of the petitioner and the respondents indorsed hereon in accordance with Rule 42(2) of this Court, the Bank of Boston International files this brief as *amicus curiae*, urging reversal of the judgment below.

Interest of the *Amicus Curiae*

The *amicus curiae*, Bank of Boston International (hereafter "BBI"), has an interest in this case in that it is the plaintiff in *Bank of Boston International* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 61 Civ. 2116, an action pending before the United States District Court for the Southern District

of New York, in which is involved, *inter alia*, a substantially similar question to that presented for decision in the instant case, that is, whether statements by counsel* that an obligation will not be honored constitute an act of state. The question is presented in even more extreme terms than in *Dunhill*, since in the *Bank of Boston* case the statements of counsel which were made are in direct conflict with the legislation and administrative resolutions of the Republic of Cuba which expressly assumed the contractual obligation upon which the claim of BBI is based.

Bank of Boston International v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*

BBI commenced its action in the Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of New York, in April 1961. Defendant, Banco Nacional de Cuba, removed the action to the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. Jurisdiction over the defendant was acquired by levy pursuant to an order of attachment upon all its property located in New York County. The attachment has remained in effect at all times since April 1961. A trial was held in the Southern District of New York before the Honorable Frederick V. P. Bryan from June 12 to June 14, 1972 and on July 17, 1972. The case is still *sub judice*, presumably, awaiting a final determination of the instant petition.

The claim for relief asserted by BBI arose out of a loss to BBI's assignor, The First National Bank of Boston (the "Boston Bank"), resulting from commercial transactions

* The same counsel that made the statement in *Dunhill*.

in the form of 324 letters of credit issued by the several Cuban branches of the Boston Bank (collectively the "Cuban Branch"), prior to their expropriation by the Cuban government, for the account of Cuban importers and in favor of exporters to Cuba located primarily in the United States. The letters of credit provided that drafts drawn under them were payable to such exporters at the office of the Boston Bank in Boston, or at the office of BBI in New York. Upon expropriation, Banco Nacional de Cuba assumed control of the Cuban Branch. Thereafter, pursuant to such letters of credit, the Boston Bank paid out $1,675,748.71 to finance (also after the expropriation) the importation of essential merchandise into Cuba.

It is BBI's contention that under cases such as *Pan-American Bank and Trust Co.* v. *National City Bank of New York*, 6 F.2d 762 (2d Cir.), *cert. denied*, 269 U.S. 554 (1925), the Cuban Branch owed a legally recognizable obligation to reimburse its head office for payments made under these letters of credit and that this obligation was assumed by Banco Nacional under the expropriation decrees which transferred to Banco Nacional all liabilities, as well as $8,000,000 in assets, of the Cuban Branch. In addition, BBI seeks to recover the amount paid upon these letters of credit upon a contractual obligation expressly undertaken by Banco Nacional prior to expropriation of the Cuban Branch of the Boston Bank (and relied upon by the Boston Bank) to make dollars available to the Boston Bank in an amount equal to payments made under the 324 letters of credit.

BBI's claim did not challenge or disregard any act of the Republic of Cuba. Rather it brought an action that sought

to affirm acts of the Cuban state.* In its first claim, BBI relied on Law No. 930 of the Republic of Cuba which provided that Banco Nacional, as the legal successor to the Cuban Branch, had assumed all the obligations of the Cuban Branch peculiar to its banking operations. Cuban Law No. 930, Special Provision Fifth (1961). In its second claim BBI showed that prior to nationalization (a) Banco Nacional approved every one of the letter of credit transactions; (b) the head of the exchange control department of Banco Nacional expressly represented to officers of the Cuban Branch that such approvals were a commitment to reimburse the Boston Bank for payments made under letters of credit; and (c) payment of dollars by Banco Nacional was required pursuant to the relevant Cuban foreign exchange statutes (Cuban Law No. 13 Article 81 (1948); Cuban Law No. 891 (1960)).

In response to BBI's showing of various statutes, regulations, judicial decisions and other governmental acts of the Republic of Cuba, defendant Banco Nacional offered no evidence of any contrary "act" of the Cuban state other than the passive failure to reimburse the Boston Bank and the assertions of defendant's attorneys made for the first time on the eve of trial eleven years after the case was brought. Defendant conceded that its assertion that the mere failure to pay constitutes an act of state was the same argument it raised in the *Dunhill* case.

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* The expropriation decrees were the same decrees involved in *First National City Bank* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*, 406 U.S. 759 (1972).

ARGUMENT

I.

Statements by Trial Counsel Cannot Constitute an Act of State.

An attorney's statement in court that an act of state exists does no more than *raise* the issue, as a pleading or argument. It cannot serve as *proof* that an act of state has taken place. If this Court rules that in court statements by an attorney can constitute an act of state, no United States court could ever render a judgment in a contract action against a foreign sovereign since an attorney could simply immunize his client from liability by coming into court and asserting that his client will not pay, regardless of the reason. Indeed, under the reasoning of the Court of Appeals in the instant case, the filing of an answer denying liability would totally insulate any such defendant from any liability whatsoever.

The lengths to which this dangerous precedent will be carried, if allowed to stand, is graphically demonstrated by *Bank of Boston International* v. *Banco Nacional de Cuba*. In that case, plaintiff's claim as to the liability of Banco Nacional de Cuba is *predicated* on official statutes and resolutions of the Cuban government which have never been repealed and are still in full force and effect. To consider the eleventh-year assertions of counsel as an act of state is dubious under any circumstances, but to allow such statements to overrule and countermand official acts of state is absurd. Yet that is precisely the contention being made by Banco Nacional on the strength of the Court of Appeals' decision in *Dunhill*.

II.

If the Decision Below Is Allowed to Stand the Repudiation of Contractual Obligations Will Be Rewarded and International Trade Will Be Seriously Curtailed.

It is common knowledge that the recent years have witnessed a marked increase in international trade and commerce; and that as foreign governments have become increasingly involved in commercial activities this foreign commerce has increasingly consisted of transactions by United States businesses or the United States Government with foreign governments acting in a commercial capacity. INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT, p. 37 (1974). This trade is of great importance to the United States economy. If it is to continue to prosper, it is essential that there be assurance that contractual obligations voluntarily undertaken by foreign governments and quasi-governmental bodies such as Banco Nacional will not lightly be nullified. While banks and others realize that there is such a doctrine as the Act of State, and that there are certain situations in which contracts can be abrogated by governmental acts, the risk from such acts should be clearly limited to those situations in which the governmental act is clearly evident. Rather than acquiesce in wholesale affronts to international law, this Court should establish a clear burden of proof for any foreign governmental agency claiming a windfall excuse from liability. Any holding of this Court which will allow a foreign government to escape responsibility for its commercial contractual obligations merely by having an attorney come into court and say that the government has decided not to pay would create the

potential of foreign governments and quasi-governmental bodies repudiating any time they choose contractual obligations solemnly assumed. Obviously, in addition to conferring on these foreign entities this potential of self-executing windfalls, any such holding would constitute a serious deterrent to the continued vitality of this form of commerce.

This Court has recognized in the area of sovereign immunity that governments may not categorically immunize themselves from claims arising out of commercial transactions. *National City Bank* v. *Republic of China*, 348 U.S. 356 (1955). Yet if counsel for a government entity can merely state that his party will not pay and thereby avoid liability, sovereign immunity will have been reestablished on a different but far broader foundation. A holding which permits firm contractual obligations to be abrogated by after-the-fact denials by trial counsel will constitute a significant deterrent to the continued making of such commitments.

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Consents to Filing

Pursuant to Rule 42(2) of this Court we hereby consent to the filing by the Bank of Boston International of this brief as *amicus curiae.*

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